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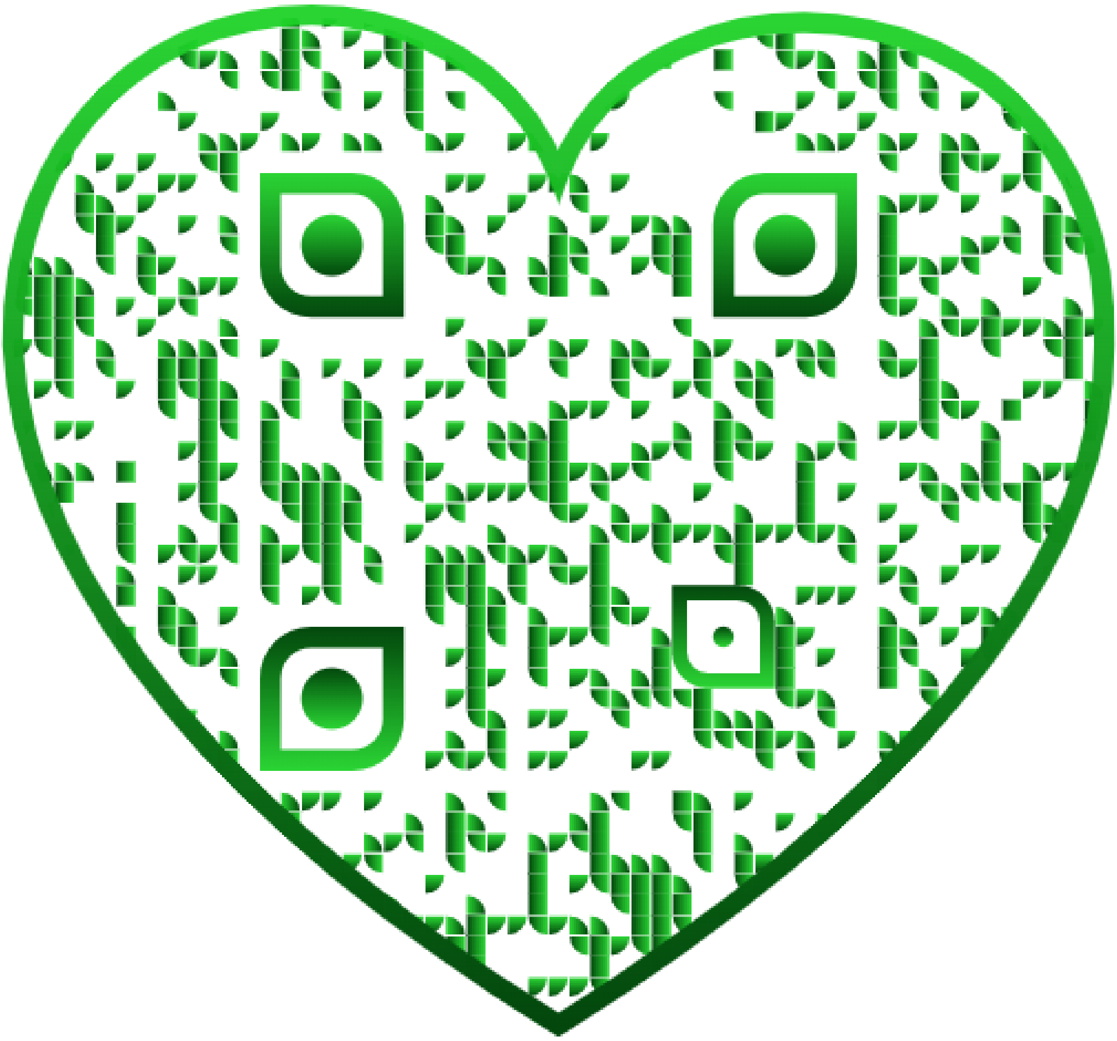

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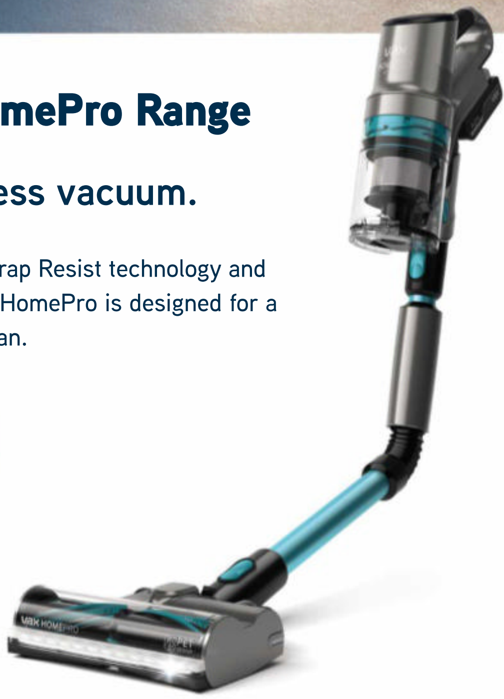

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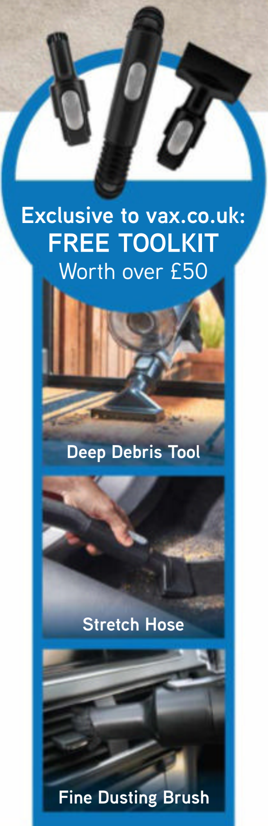

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Welcome to June

Eating a meal in the garden is one of the things I enjoy the most about summer. It feels like a climax to all the gardening efforts of spring – a reward, if you like. Dining outside can take many forms at Smith Towers, from a quick lunchtime sandwich while working at home, to a full-on dinner with friends or family that begins in the afternoon and stretches into the evening as the sun begins to set. I love both equally, but particularly savour any opportunity to eat outdoors in the beautiful long evenings of this time of year.

The only thing that improves an alfresco meal is the addition of something homegrown. What's available varies, depending on the time of year (and how on top of my veg beds I am), but even a small morsel taken straight from plot to plate makes all the difference. So, whether you're an experienced veg grower or just a beginner (or somewhere in between), I heartily encourage you to enjoy the fruits of your labour with a spot of outdoor eating – you deserve your reward.

In other news, before I sign off, I wanted to let you know that we've had a team shuffle here at *GW* HQ and this issue will be my last as Editor of the magazine. My colleague Kay Maguire will take the reins from July, and I'll now lead content for all areas of the *GW* brand, not just our magazine, so you'll still see plenty of me! Kay is a hugely experienced gardener and editor, and has been part of the *GW* family for more than 20 years, so rest assured that the magazine we all love so much is in very safe hands. Over to you Kay...

Kevin

Kevin Smith, Content Director
@kevinsmithgarden

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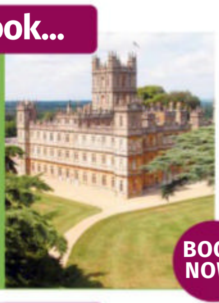

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Here at *GW*, our goal is simple: to provide expert, trusted advice and inspiration to gardeners – whenever and wherever they need us. Through all of this, we're rooted in a set of core values that are at the heart of all we do:

✔ **Dependable advice** We equip everyone to get the very best from their plants and gardens. Our in-house gardening experts are trained to the highest standard and always deliver dependable know-how, making *GW* the go-to place for practical advice.

✔ **Top gardening names** We work with the best gardening writers and content creators in the business, including *Gardeners' World* TV presenters and other high-profile names. Our content is world-class, with quality, impartiality and accuracy at its core.

✔ **Every space counts** We understand that gardens come in all shapes and sizes, from indoor windowsills and balconies to country plots and community spaces. Our content is inclusive, and we recognise that everyone can garden regardless of their ability, space, available time or budget.

✔ **Homegrown & healthy** We champion the health benefits of gardening. Whether it's growing veggies with the kids to encourage healthy eating, or getting outdoors to aid mental health, we recognise and celebrate how good gardening is for us.

✔ **Beyond the plot** We help the nation's gardeners engage with their passion in all areas of life – think live events (big and small), travel inspiration and a podcast for the commute. We're on hand for gardeners whenever they need us.

✔ **Planet first** Above all, we put the interests of the planet at the heart of everything we do, from caring for garden wildlife and encouraging environment-friendly techniques to working in the most sustainable ways possible. And we understand that gardeners care deeply about the climate crisis.

Thank you for being part of our *GW* family – it means a lot to have you on board. And however you enjoy *GW*, happy gardening!

Kevin Smith,
Content Director
@kevinsmithgarden

Kevin

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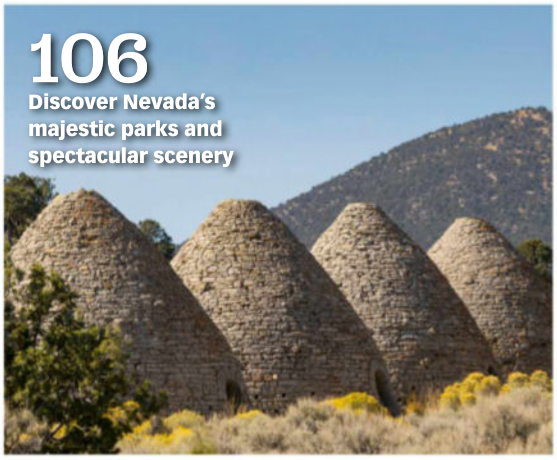
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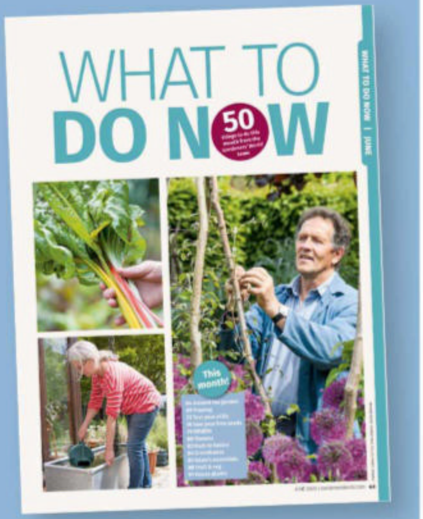
Your 18-page June planner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> "June is the pearl of summer, shining with warmth and joy"
>
> L.M.Montgomery

We love June

These are days about which we were dreaming on those dreary winter afternoons. Time the great healer has moved on and the chill of January, the rain of February and the overcooked turkey of Christmas have all faded to a sepia shadow. June is about flower, the ruffling of fresh foliage, fattening lettuces and long weekends of gardening and drinking wine in the gentle shade of trees. Be it in public parks or, if we are lucky, in our own gardens, this is a month where we should spend as much time as possible outdoors and savour every minute of every hour.

WORDS JAMES ALEXANDER-SINCLAIR

STAR OF THE MONTH

Centaurea cyanus 'Polka Dot Mixed'

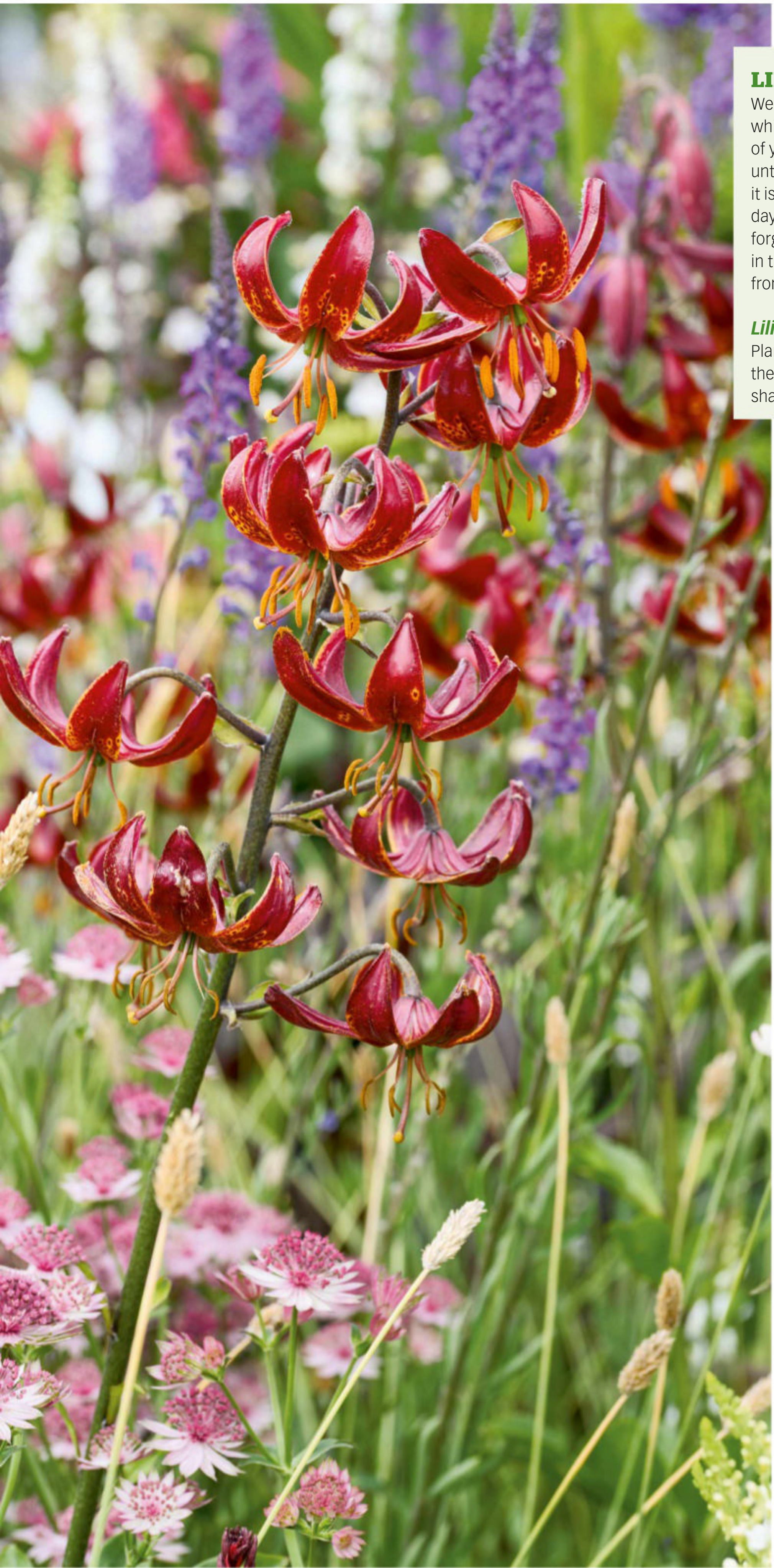
Picture yourselves at about the age of eight. It is your birthday and a party is planned. The morning has been fraught: as with all birthdays the excitement begins early and ramps up and up until it reaches a melting point, when it all goes wrong and there are tears and tiredness. The skill is getting through the party before that moment comes. Why am I drivelling on about this? Because, to me these cornflowers remind me of Iced Gems – those little biscuits with pastel-coloured swirls of icing sugar, which were a stalwart at parties when I was a child.

Sow in March-May directly, or late sowings in August-October can be overwintered.

Height x Spread 45cm x 30cm

PHOTO: JASON INGRAM

Great coffee
is in the family
TAYLORS
OF HARROGATE
Lazy Sunday
GROUND
3
Rich Italian
BEANS
4
Decaffé
GROUND
4
200g
TAYLORS
OF HARROGATE



LILY SURPRISE

We all love a gardeny surprise: a shrub which we had planted in a rush a couple of years ago and had forgotten it existed until, suddenly one morning we find that it is flowering perfectly and it makes our day. Maybe it is my age but I consistently forget about these lilies until they appear in the border. Like an unexpected visit from a much-loved old friend.

***Lilium* 'Claude Shride'**

Plant bulbs in autumn. Will seed themselves if happy. Best in dappled shade. **H x S** 1.2m x 25cm

A BERRY GOOD MONTH

It is June: Wimbledon, picnics, cricket matches and warm afternoons. Absolutely the right time for strawberries – with cream, ice cream or (if you are watching heart or health) just au naturel. Any that appear on supermarket shelves out of season will invariably be tasteless and deeply disappointing. The strawberry is always best warm and, ideally, picked from your own garden. Easy to grow and perfect for a pot or a window box.

Fragaria x ananassa

Straw under the plants can help deter slugs. Replace plants every few years. Easily propagated from runners. **H x S** 20cm x 30cm

PHOTO: NEIL HEPWORTH; JASON INGRAM

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BEE BUFFET

If you wanted to lay on an All-You-Can-Eat buffet for bees, butterflies and all the pollinator crowd then this a pretty good place to start. Every flower is stuffed with nectar – if you were a bee then this would be as desirable as a double scoop of ice cream with chocolate sauce, a flake and a scattering of marshmallows. Fortunately, bees don't have a problem with their weight so can pile in without restraint.

Echium vulgare

Excellent cut flower. Sow seeds directly into prepared ground in March/April.
H x S 90cm x 30cm

PHOTO: JASON INGRAM

PHOTOS: JASON INGRAM

Cynoglossum amabile 'Mystic Pink' (Chinese forget-me-not)

PLANT UP A POT...

Twilight glow

Embrace the start of summer evenings outside with plants that perform at dusk. Pale flowers come into their own as dusk descends, taking on a luminous quality and none more so than super long-flowering anemones. The white petals of Anemone Wild Swan are lilac on the back and shimmer like mother-of-pearl, appearing to glow as light levels drop. Along with the Nicotiana langsdorffii 'Lemon tree' (Langdorff's tobacco plant), Cynoglossum amabile 'Mystic Pink' (Chinese forget-me-not), and the ornamental grass, Hakonechloa macra, it also thrives in part shade.

Providing it is big enough, almost anything with drainage holes can be used as a container and the bluish tones of this repurposed galvanised metal tub echo the colours of plants. After they've finished flowering, remove the spent annuals and leave the anemone and hakonechloa to continue growing in the tub.

Tips

- Feed weekly with a liquid seaweed or tomato food to encourage long flowering.
- Keep the compost damp, aiming a jet of water at the compost and roots rather than the leaves and flowers.

WORDS LUCY BELLAMY

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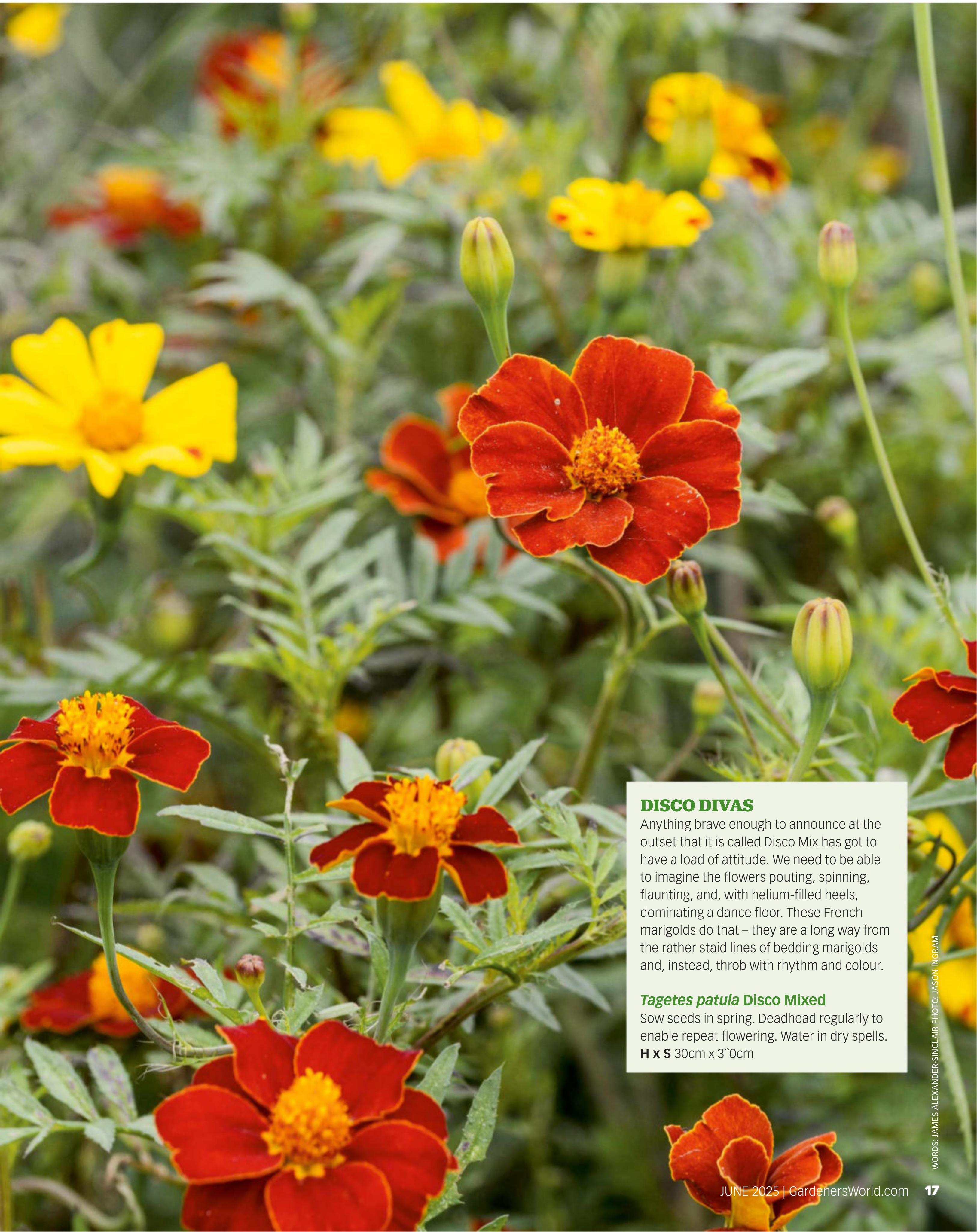

DISCO DIVAS

Anything brave enough to announce at the outset that it is called Disco Mix has got to have a load of attitude. We need to be able to imagine the flowers pouting, spinning, flaunting, and, with helium-filled heels, dominating a dance floor. These French marigolds do that – they are a long way from the rather staid lines of bedding marigolds and, instead, throb with rhythm and colour.

Tagetes patula Disco Mixed

Sow seeds in spring. Deadhead regularly to enable repeat flowering. Water in dry spells.
H x S 30cm x 3``0cm

WORDS: JAMES ALEXANDER-SINCLAIR PHOTO: JASON INGRAM

PHOTOS: BLICKWINKEL / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Catch Kate Bradbury's wildlife videos for subscribers every month at **GardenersWorld.com/premium**

YOU MAY SPOT...

Garden tiger moth, *Arctia caja*

A beautiful moth with a velvety brown thorax, cream antennae, and cream and brown forewings above orange and inky blue hindwings, which it will flash to deter predators if disturbed. The adults are attracted to light, including porch and security lights. Mating takes place now, while its 'woolly bear' caterpillars feed on a variety of herbaceous 'weeds' including nettles, docks and greater knapweed, before pupating in leaf litter and other detritus in autumn.

Did you know?

■ Previously common in gardens, and although still widespread across Britain, the garden tiger moth has suffered declines of around 90 per cent since the 1960s – due to habitat loss and climate change. You can help by growing caterpillar foodplants and being less tidy in autumn.

WORDS KATE BRADBURY

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The Full Monty

Despite vowing never to get involved in creating a show garden, when **Monty** was asked to combine his two biggest passions for a very special project, how could he resist?

It may have come to your notice that I created a garden at this year's Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show. Until last July I had consistently said – and meant – that I would never consider doing a show garden at any flower show, let alone at Chelsea. Over the years, I have designed a number of gardens for other people as well as my own but always in my own way, which uses trial and error as much as any carefully formulated design. It is a process of slow and often contradictory evolution. However, show gardens have to arrive fully formed and unalterably fixed by 8am on the morning of Press Day and, as I have had to learn, including not just every small detail but also the detail of the detail. Nevertheless, despite this, when the RHS approached me to see if I was interested in designing its garden for Chelsea 2025 based upon dogs in the garden, I found myself agreeing to do it.

Two things swung it for me. The first one was the involvement of dogs. I cannot imagine Longmeadow without a dog stepping out into the garden with me and remaining at my side all day. They are as much part of the garden as the plants or my family. The second inspiration was a garden that I visited just outside Madrid, as part of my *Spanish Gardens* series, designed by Alvaro Sampedro who had been commissioned to create a garden around a new, very modern, house that would be ideal 'for dogs'. I loved the way that he created an area where gravel paths wind through the planting, patterned with young self-sown seedlings, and are designed to reflect the way that a dog follows its nose through vegetation in a twisting, mazy fashion. The result is low maintenance and looked great on both occasions I visited it.

I took this idea for part of my garden using a palette of plants suitable for a British climate. I wanted all the plants, from the biggest tree to the smallest annual, to be simple and familiar – there is nothing remotely unusual or rare in my garden, so there are grasses, foxgloves, verbena, poppies, valerian and alchemilla, with lots of alliums and topiary balls of different sizes and kinds. It is intended to be in a permanent state of flux, shot through with temporary paths.

At the beginning of April, myself and Jamie Butterworth – who has grown all the plants and worked with me almost daily to make my slightly vague and impractical ideas a reality – did an experiment with Ned, laying out plants and hiding bits of biscuits before watching him make his way through the border to find his reward. The result was a tracery of paths looking like the branches of a tree rather than random meanderings. In this respect, Ned can claim a co-designing credit.

> *"If you have dogs, you need grass for canine sprawling, sleeping and chasing balls"*

Lawns are the most ordinary and common component of any garden but as rare as hen's teeth at Chelsea. Nevertheless, if you have dogs, you need some grass for canine sprawling, sleeping, rolling, flopping, itching and, most importantly of all, chasing balls. So there is a scruffy lawn in the centre of the garden. The grass continues under the shade of trees and shrubs, getting longer and planted with bulbs before the flowers shift to those of the woodland edge, and there is a stream with a wallow, where hot dogs can lie and cool off.

The brick paths are just wide enough for a wheelbarrow and four canine paws, and have the names of favourite dogs engraved into them. You cannot imagine the weeks and weeks of discussion about the choice of bricks and then the care with which they have been lovingly distressed to look suitably aged. A building made from reclaimed materials – like all the sheds at Longmeadow – is half summer house and half luxurious kennel, with an old leather sofa for a dog bed, piped dog music chosen by BBC Radio 2 listeners and a screen showing all the best doggy clips from filming at Longmeadow.

Pots of delicious couch grass are available as doggy snacks and the fruit of fine orange trees in pots dangle like perfect orange balls. The pots, of course, are specially made for the garden with a dog motif.

From the outset I wanted the garden to be fun. We have nothing to sell, no message to impart. It is simply a celebration of our deep love of dogs and the gardens that we share with them. And at the end of the show the Dog Garden will be relocated to its permanent resting place at Battersea Dogs and Cats Home. As for me, I will relocate to Longmeadow having loved the experience, but knowing that I will never, ever do it again!

Monty

PHOTO: MARSHA ARNOLD

BBC TWO **MONTY ON TV** Catch Monty and the *Gardeners' World* team on Friday nights this month – see TV listings for details. Also, Monty is on stage at Gardeners' World Live (12-15 June) at the NEC Birmingham on Thu 12, Fri 13 and Sat 14 June

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The collection contains six each of:

- ***Verbena bonariensis*** x 6
The tightly clustered purple florets sit atop long stalks, adding airy height to borders. Loved by bees.
Height x Spread 1.2m x 60cm **Flowers** Jun-Oct

- ***Leucanthemum* 'Crazy Daisy'** x 6
These frilly-petalled flowers are magnets for pollinating insects. Great as cut flowers.
H x S 60cm x 45cm
F Jun-Jul

- ***Dianthus barbatus* Mix** x 6
These sweet Williams produce clusters of scented blooms in shades of red, white and purple, on stiff upright stems.
H x S 45cm x 30cm
F Jun-Sep

- ***Aquilegia* Mrs Scott-Elliot hybrids** x 6
Multi-coloured blooms in a range of hues, in late spring and early summer. They will also self-seed, and make long-lasting cut flowers.
H x S 60cm x 40cm
F May-Jul

Supplied as plug plants, 3-6cm high, from August, to pot up and grow on, then plant out in autumn or spring

For more offers and details of how to order, see opposite page

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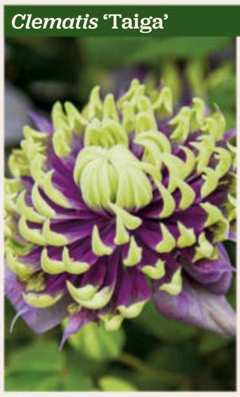
More great offers on flowering plants

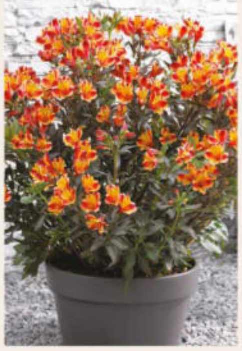
Clematis 'Taiga'



Spectacular two-tone blooms make this climber a real showstopper.
H x S 2.5m x 1m
F Jul-Sep

- 1 plant in 9cm pot ~~£14.99~~ **£12.99** **SAVE £2** *(KA8208)*
- 3 plants in 9cm pots ~~£44.97~~ **£19.99** **SAVE £24.98** *(KA8940)*

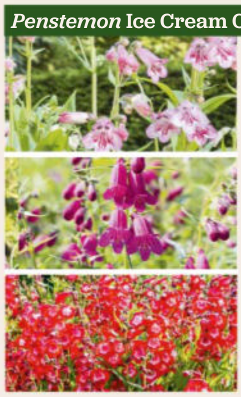
Alstroemeria Indian Summer



A hardy, compact Peruvian lily, ideal for sunny borders and containers.
H x S 75cm x 60cm
F Jul-Oct

- 1 jumbo plug ~~£12.99~~ **£11.99** **SAVE £1** *(40844)*
- 3 jumbo plugs ~~£38.97~~ **£19.99** **SAVE £18.98** *(KB7784)*

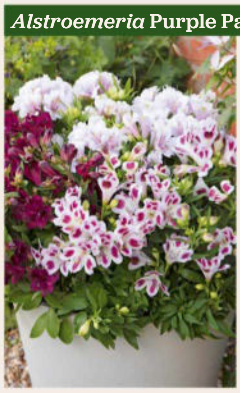
Penstemon Ice Cream Collection



Attractive varieties: 'Strawberries and Cream', 'Blackberry' and 'Sweet Cherry'.
H x S 80cm x 45cm
F Jun-Oct

- 3 jumbo plugs (1 of each) ~~£12.99~~ **£11.99** **SAVE £1** *(KB8442)*
- 6 jumbo plugs (1 of each) ~~£25.98~~ **£19.99** **SAVE £5.99** *(KB8443)*

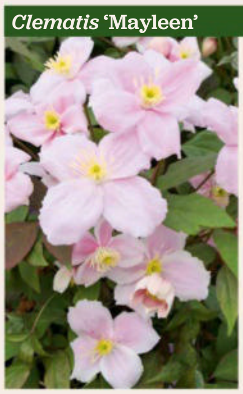
Alstroemeria Purple Passion Collection



Three Peruvian lilies: Inticancha Moonlight, Inticancha Paraíso, Inticancha Navayo
H x S 35cm x 30cm
F Jun-Oct

- 3 jumbo plugs ~~£19.99~~ **£17.99** **SAVE £2** *(KF0930)*
- 6 jumbo plugs ~~£39.98~~ **£32.99** **SAVE £6.99** *(KF1510)*

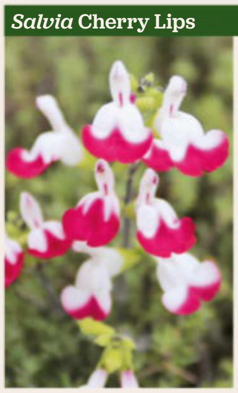
Clematis 'Mayleen'



Vigorous climber with richly fragrant, pink blooms. Best in partial shade.
H x S 6m x 3m
F May-Jun

- 1 plant in 7cm pot **£11.99** *(10046)*
- 3 plants in 7cm pots ~~£35.97~~ **£18.99** **SAVE £16.98** *(KB6199)*

Salvia Cherry Lips



Vibrant bi-coloured blooms for a sunny spot. Blackcurrant-scented foliage.
H x S 90cm x 60cm
F Jun-Nov

- 3 jumbo plugs ~~£10.99~~ **£9.99** **SAVE £1** *(KB8279)*
- 9 jumbo plugs ~~£32.97~~ **£16.99** **SAVE £15.98** *(KF8415)*

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40844 KB7784	***Alstroemeria* Indian Summer** x 1 ~~£12.99~~ **SAVE £1** ***Alstroemeria* Indian Summer** x 3 ~~£38.97~~ **SAVE £18.98**	£11.99 £19.99	£10.79 £17.99		
KB8442 KB8443	**Penstemon Ice Cream Collection** x 3 ~~£12.99~~ **SAVE £1** **Penstemon Ice Cream Collection** x 6 ~~£25.98~~ **SAVE £5.99**	£11.99 £19.99	£10.79 £17.99		
KF0930 KF1510	**Alstroemeria Purple Passion** x 3 ~~£19.99~~ **SAVE £2** **Alstroemeria Purple Passion** x 6 ~~£39.98~~ **SAVE £6.99**	£17.99 £32.99	£16.19 £29.69		
10046 KB6199	***Clematis* 'Mayleen'** x 1 ***Clematis* 'Mayleen'** x 3 ~~£35.97~~ **SAVE £16.98**	£11.99 £18.99	£10.79 £17.09		
KB8279 KF8415	***Salvia* Cherry Lips** x 3 ~~£10.99~~ **SAVE £1** ***Salvia* Cherry Lips** x 9 ~~£32.97~~ **SAVE £15.98**	£9.99 £16.99	£8.99 £15.29		
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Expert's choice

Super-scented sweet peas

They may be colourful and easy to grow, but it's the intoxicating perfume that really attracts us to sweet peas, says **Graham Rice**

Ask almost any gardener and they'll tell you that the most important thing about sweet peas is their scent. But when it comes to choosing varieties, how do you know which one has the most powerful fragrance?

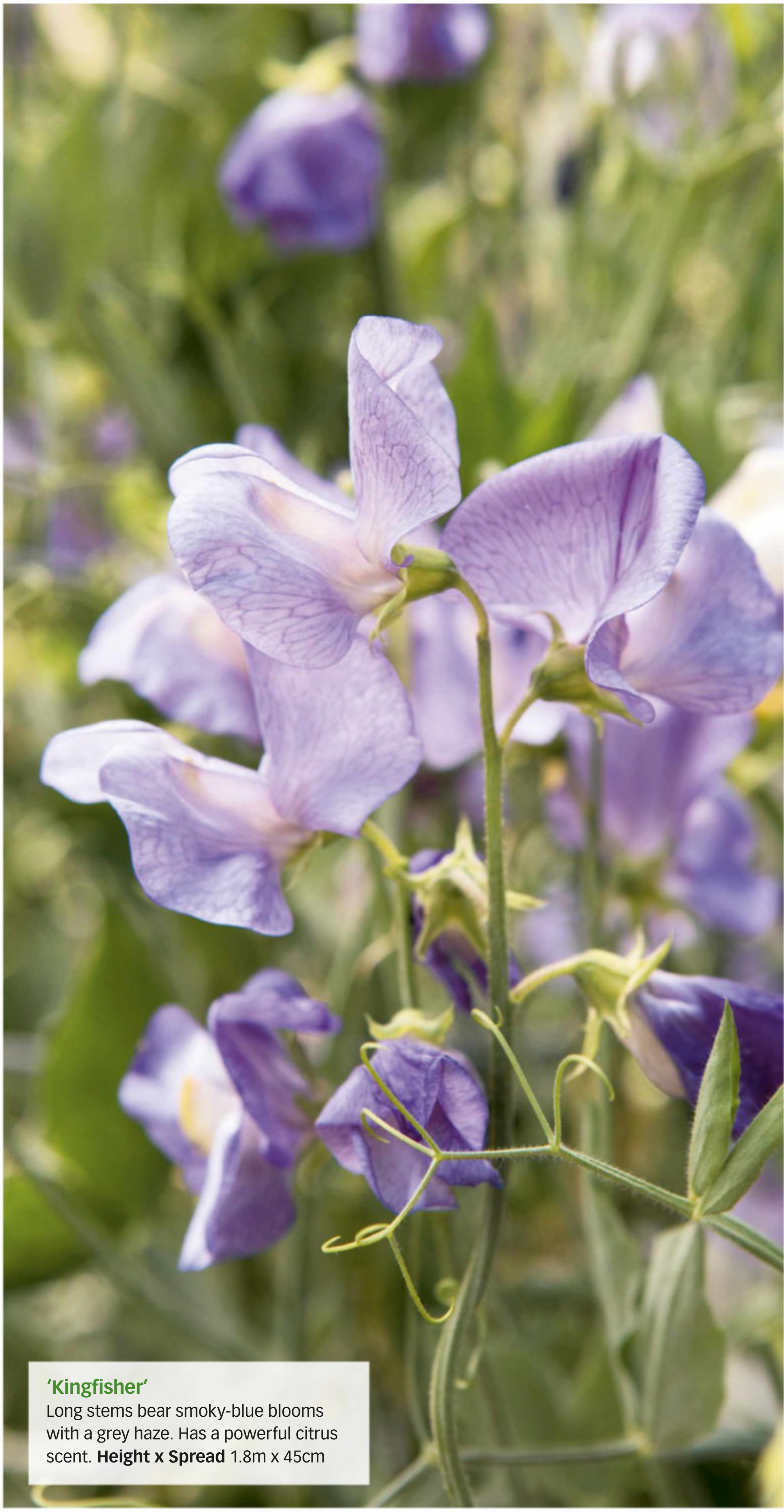
Some suppliers use slightly nebulous phrases such as 'strongly scented' and 'powerfully fragrant'. Some use symbols: little cartoons of perfume atomisers used to be popular. Some use a star rating: varieties with one star have no scent, while those with five have the strongest.

The new Plant Heritage National Collection Holder, English Sweet Peas, has a similar numbering system, but – and this is clever – in a few rare cases it awards six stars out of five! These are the super-scented varieties, which are often creamy or have bluish tints. Look out for these first. And while some of these might seem similar, their scents are distinctive.

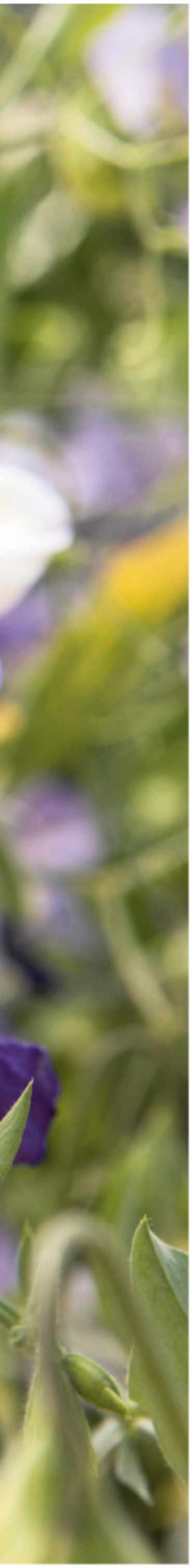
The National Collection has divided sweet pea fragrance into five scent groups: sweet, citrus, musk and spice, plus one that covers those with distinctive, one-of-a-kind scents that defy categorisation. This is helpful.

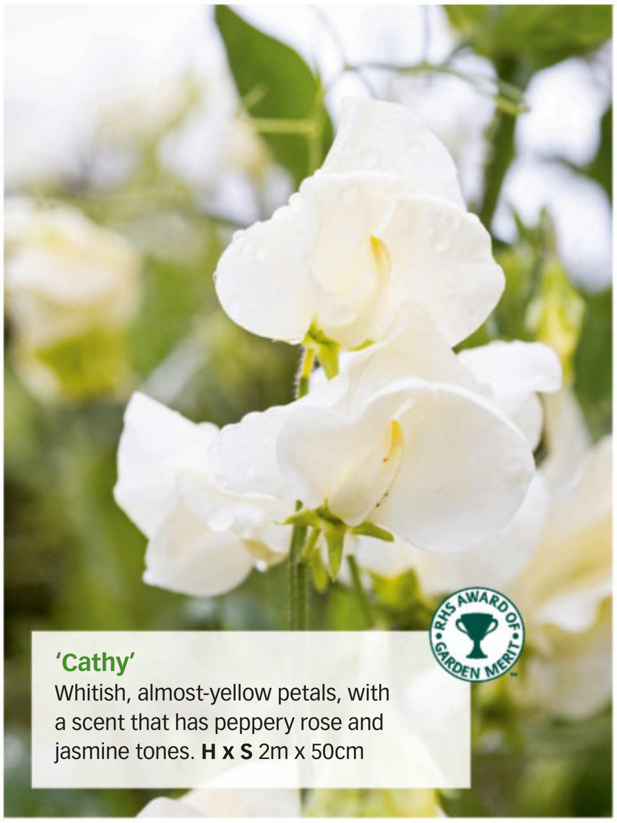
Keep in mind that sweet pea scent is strongest on warm and sunny days, and in newly opened flowers. And as we get older, scent is less easily detected. But the simplest approach when choosing for scent is to follow the ratings – and what could be better than six out of five?

- **Sowing** Sow seeds in pots or deep cells, from late autumn to early spring.
- **Position** In an open, sunny location, prepare the site with extra organic matter and plant in spring. Set supports in place before planting. Guide the developing shoots in the right direction or tie them in.
- **Care** Pick flowers or deadhead frequently for a longer display.
- **Where to buy** chilternseeds.co.uk, 01491 824675; englishsweetpeas.co.uk, 07396 730383; kingsseeds.com, 01376 570000; mr-fothergills.co.uk, 0333 777 3936

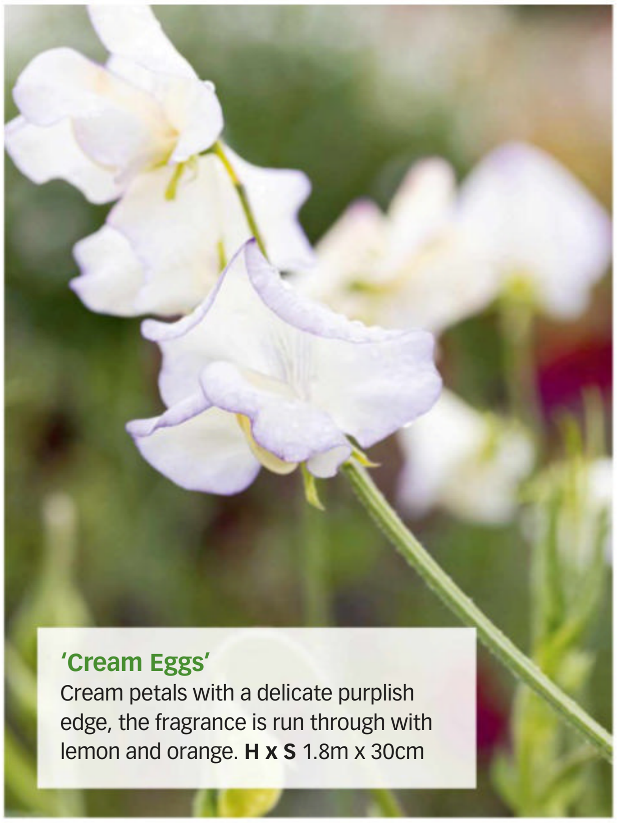


'Kingfisher'
Long stems bear smoky-blue blooms with a grey haze. Has a powerful citrus scent. **Height x Spread** 1.8m x 45cm

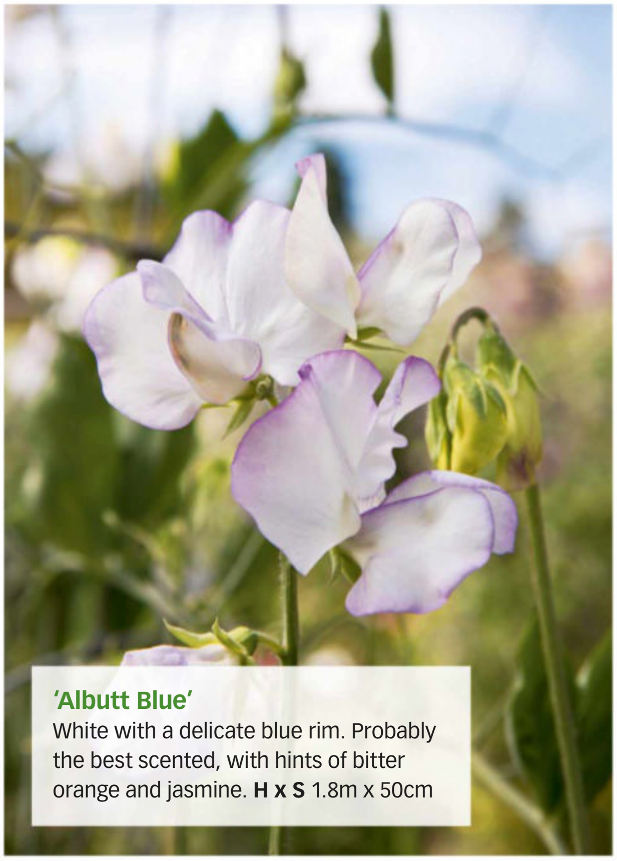




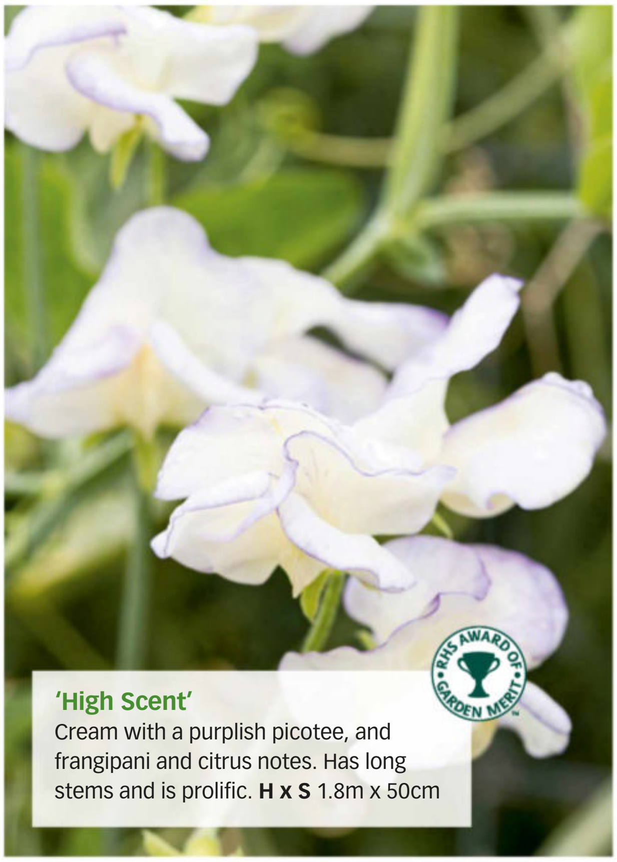
'Cathy'
Whitish, almost-yellow petals, with a scent that has peppery rose and jasmine tones. **H x S** 2m x 50cm



'Cream Eggs'
Cream petals with a delicate purplish edge, the fragrance is run through with lemon and orange. **H x S** 1.8m x 30cm



'Albutt Blue'
White with a delicate blue rim. Probably the best scented, with hints of bitter orange and jasmine. **H x S** 1.8m x 50cm



'High Scent'
Cream with a purplish picotee, and frangipani and citrus notes. Has long stems and is prolific. **H x S** 1.8m x 50cm

Super-scented sweet peas

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Seed sowing	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩							🟩	🟩
Flowering						🟪	🟪	🟪	🟪			

PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; PAUL DEBOIS

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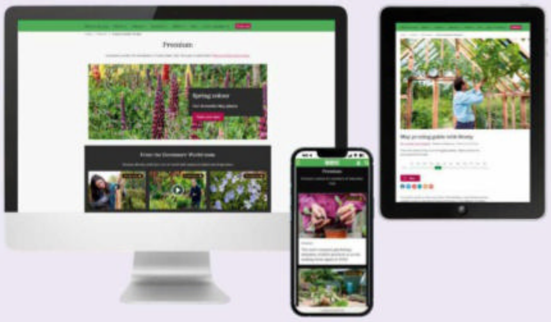

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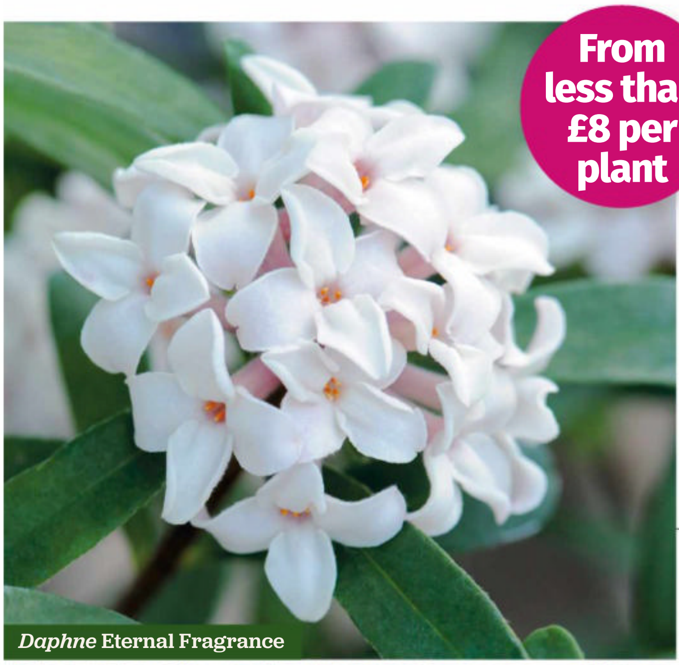
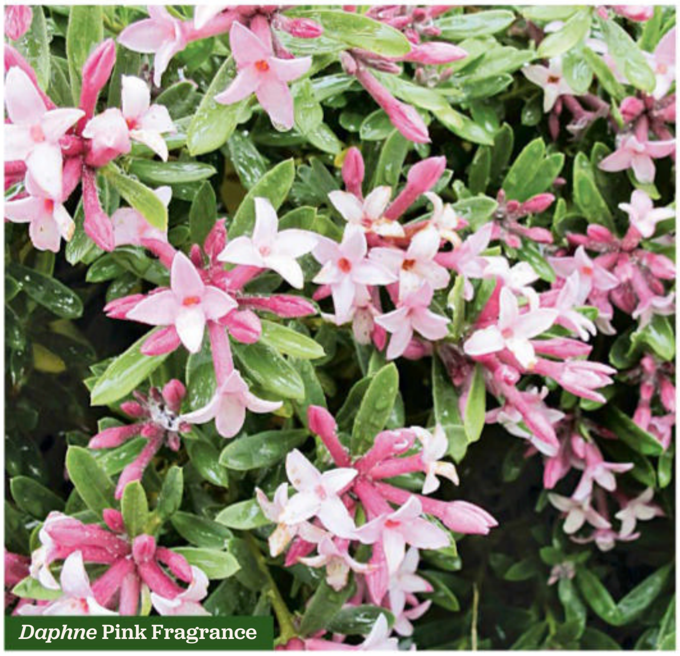

Daphne Eternal Fragrance


Daphne Pink Fragrance

■ *Daphne* Eternal Fragrance

The pale pink blooms of this unusual semi-evergreen daphne fill the air with sweet perfume. This elegant shrub is perfect for planting in a warm, sheltered spot near a door, pathway or patio, so you can enjoy its scent to the full. Compact and slow-growing, it flowers on new growth so the blooms keep coming.

Height x Spread 90cm x 90cm
Flowers Apr-Oct
■ 1 plant in 9cm pot ~~£17.99~~
£9.99 SAVE £8 (*40503*)
■ 2 plants in 9cm pots ~~£35.98~~
£16 SAVE £19.98 (*KB6204*)
■ 3 plants in 9cm pots ~~£53.97~~
£22.99 SAVE £30.98 – just £7.66 per plant (*KB0505*)

■ *Daphne* Pink Fragrance

With richly fragrant, pink blooms, opening from darker buds, this semi-evergreen daphne is a treat for the senses. It flowers non-stop from spring through to autumn and is fully hardy. Plant it in sun or light shade in a warm, sheltered location with free-draining but moisture-retentive soil.

H x S 90cm x 90cm **F** Apr-Oct
■ 1 plant in 9cm pot ~~£17.99~~
£11.99 SAVE £6 (*79754*)
■ 2 plants in 9cm pots ~~£35.98~~
£16.99 SAVE £18.99 (*KA7586*)

YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE…

■ *Clematis* 'Kokonoe'

This new variety produces extravagant double flowers with rich purple petals. The first flowers of the season are singles, then later flowers have a ruff of petals in the centre. This spectacular climber can be grown up an obelisk, trellis or supports attached to a wall or fence.

H x S 2m x 75cm **F** Jun-Oct
■ 1 plant in 9cm pot ~~£14.99~~
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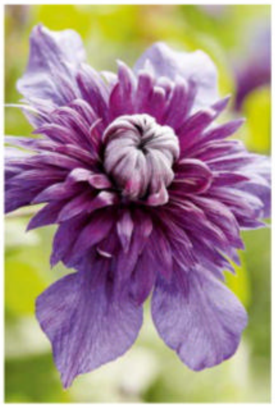

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NEW READER EVENT!

Ridgeview Wine Estate in the South Downs National Park

Meet the team behind Ridgeview's award-winning wines

An English wine estate experience

Thursday 28 August 2025, £185pp

Join the *BBC Gardeners' World Magazine* team for our first reader event at Ridgeview Wine Estate, where you'll have access to areas of the estate and experiences not usually open to the public. Guided by Ridgeview's world-renowned team, including a viticulture specialist and an award-winning winemaker, you'll gain a fascinating insight into the vineyard and winemaking process, from grape to glass.

Nestled in Sussex's South Downs National Park, Ridgeview is at the forefront of the English wine industry and has earned global recognition, including being served at Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee, King Charles's first state banquet, and at COP26.

Your day includes

- **Q&A** with a Ridgeview winemaker
- **Vineyard tour and talk** with Ridgeview's viticulture expert
- Visit to Ridgeview's original **underground cellar**, not usually open to the public.
- **Tank tasting** in the winery, sampling Ridgeview's Signature non-vintage blends – an exclusive experience not available to the public.
- A glass of Ridgeview's **Blanc de Blancs Magnum 2010**
- Lunch in Ridgeview's restaurant **The Rows & Vine**
- Opportunity to explore the estate's woodlands and browse the shop with an exclusive **10% discount**.
- A **goody bag** to take home.

Timetable

- **10AM** Welcome tea/coffee and pastries on roof terrace (weather dependant)
- **10.30AM** Chat with viticulture team
- **10.50AM** Guests split into two groups: for winery and cellar tour, or for tank tasting and Q&A with winemaker
- **11.45AM** Groups swap
- **12.30PM** Ridgeview wine-tasting with local cheese pairing
- **1.15PM** Call for lunch at The Rows & Vine restaurant (guests will be seated with other guests in the group)
- **1.30PM** Lunch served with a glass of Ridgeview Bloomsbury NV
- **3PM** Explore woodlands and visit shop
- **3.30PM** Depart with your goody bag

HOW TO BOOK

Subscribers: see p27 for your exclusive booking details
Places are limited, so don't delay

RIDGEVIEW
ENGLAND

T&Cs Booking essential. Event date: 28 August 2025, 10am-3.30pm. Location: Ridgeview Wine Estate, near Ditchling Common in East Sussex. We have dedicated disabled parking spaces and step-free access from our car park, across the entire estate including the vineyard. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount codes. You will be seated with other guests. Limited places available. Browse other exclusive *GW* events at GardenersWorld.com/travel-and-events and our reader testimonials at GardenersWorld.com/feedback

2 for 1 Gardens

BBC Gardeners' World magazine
REUSABLE CARD valid until 2 April 2026
2 FOR 1 GARDENS 2025
Inspired Villages

Tip-top topiary

Topiary can be used to transform a garden, from providing structure through geometric hedging to creating fancy shapes and figures. This month, we celebrate the **2 for 1 Gardens** that have mastered the art

Step into the rococo

SAVE £12.20

As the only complete surviving garden from the fanciful rococo period, **Painswick Rococo Garden**, Glos, exudes the spirit of the era with plenty of quirky features. Explore its follies, valleys and woodland, and in June keep an eye out for blooming roses, lavender and astrantia. But the epitome of Painswick's frivolity is the clipped yew maze, which forms an ornate '250', and was installed to celebrate the garden's anniversary with the same sense of fun from which it was created. **OFFER Garden: 2 for 1** £12.20, senior £10.95; single £6.10, senior £5.30. Offer valid Mar-Nov, excluding event days. **rococogarden.org.uk**

More than a-mazing

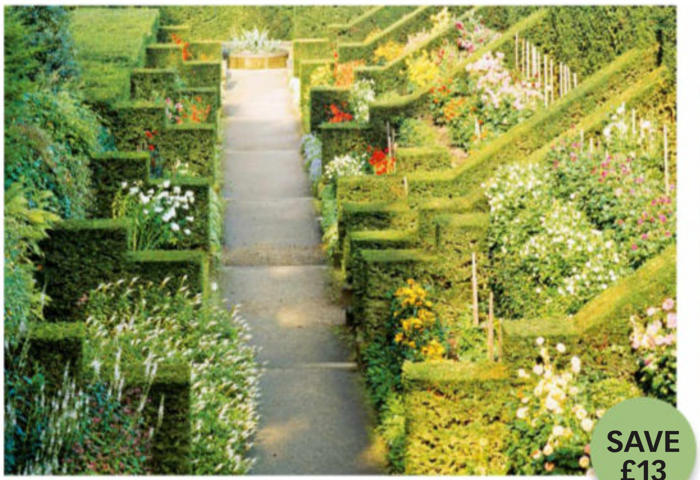
SAVE £10

Dated from 1910, the topiary at **Mount Ephraim Gardens**, Kent, is wonderfully eclectic – look out for World War One symbols among the playful bird and animal characters. A beautifully planted herbaceous border sits beside the topiary, and the terraces that cascade down to the lake are separated by yew hedges. Created using a mix of ornamental grasses and herbaceous perennials, the Miz Maze is a kaleidoscope of colour as summer reaches its zenith. **OFFER Garden: 2 for 1 £10**. Garden open 1 Apr-30 Sep, Wed-Sun. **mountephraimgardens.co.uk**

SAVE £13.10

A very Victorian revival

Following 30 years of work, **Brodsworth Hall**, Yorks, has been restored to its Victorian grandeur. Today, the house and grounds are full of interest and surprise, including a collection of 1,000 topiary hedges, with spirals, mushrooms, cones and pyramids in a joyful yet neatly clipped mass. Elsewhere, follow the sculpture walk, studded with classical statues, through the Italianate terraces, and visit the grove, which has over 100 varieties of ferns, and the impressive tree collection. **OFFER House & garden: 2 for 1** from £13.10, single reduced by 25%. Offers not valid on bank hol weekends or event dates. **english-heritage.org.uk/brodsworth**



SAVE £13

Around the world in 80 garden rooms

On a single visit to **Biddulph Grange Garden**, Staffs, you'll travel across the globe in this exciting Victorian garden created by James Bateman to house his plants from around the world. Separated by yew buttresses, each garden room is distinctive: in the Egypt garden, clipped topiary provides drama and impact, with obelisks and imposing hedging, while the China Garden is a riot of colour across the seasons. Also visit the UK's oldest stumpery, which dates from the 1850s. **OFFER Garden: 2 for 1 £13**, single reduced to £6.50. **nationaltrust.org.uk/biddulphgrangegarden**

SAVE £12.45

Trimmed to perfection

Levens Hall, Cumbria, is home to the world's oldest topiary garden. Largely unchanged since 1690, entering this ten-acre walled garden is an ethereal experience: billows of yew trees rise out of beautifully planted beds, while neatly clipped yew topiary sits beside others displaying dramatic curves and organic forms. Over 100 of these living sculptures sit in the grounds, ranging from Homer Simpson to a judge's wig. The 30,000 plants from which the topiary emerges are ever-changing, with interest provided across the seasons. There is lots more to Levens, including the first recorded ha-ha in Britain, a productive old orchard, a willow labyrinth and a rose garden. **OFFER Garden: 2 for 1** £12.45. **levenshall.co.uk**

2 for 1 Gardens at your fingertips...

Gardeners' World magazine
OVER 380 gardens to visit
2 FOR 1 GARDENS card & guide 2025
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Download our **2 for 1 Gardens app*** to browse gardens to visit and use the unique code from inside your guide to activate your digital 2 for 1 Gardens card. For more inspiration for your garden visits, visit **GardenersWorld.com/gardens**

SCAN THIS QR CODE

Before visiting a garden remember to check its website for opening and closing times as they can vary

PHOTOS: ENGLISH HERITAGE; NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/ANDREW BUTLER

*YOU MAY USE THE 2 FOR 1 PRINTED CARD OR APP FOR ADMISSION ONLY ONCE PER GARDEN, PER DAY. YOU CANNOT USE THE PRINTED CARD AND DIGITAL CARD AT THE SAME VENUE ON THE SAME DAY.

Monty has always had roses at Longmeadow, over the years acquiring hundreds of different varieties

PHOTO: JASON INGRAM

A love of roses

Roses are especially loved at Longmeadow. **Monty** shares his favourite varieties, with advice on how to keep them blooming all summer

> *"Those exquisite flowers lightened my darkness. I planted them all out and some remain more than 25 years later"*

It took me a while to love roses as a plant. I had always admired the flowers in the kind of knee-jerk way that most of us love sunsets or the song of a blackbird, but I had no feeling for them as plants and grew them almost because I felt that was what was required of anyone planting a 'proper' garden. Then I moved to Herefordshire and made my first big garden (as recounted in my long-out-of-print book, *The Prickotty Bush*).

I bought my mother-in-law a couple of roses for her birthday and became seduced by the names of the roses in the catalogue of a local nursery. They were all 'old' or 'classic' roses – gallicas, albas, damasks, mosses, centifolias, bourbons – not fashionable back then in the 1980s, and their names ran off my tongue like a floral charm, conjuring a velvety richness and fulsome sensuality that the floribundas and hybrid teas of my youth had never even hinted at.

I was hooked. So I visited the nursery – Acton Beauchamp Roses – and ordered about 50 different ones, three of each, at an absurdly cheap wholesale price of about a pound or so a rose. That summer the little stubby plants produced their first flowers, and I savoured and tried each one, as a wine buff tasting a new vintage. I was no rose buff, but a lifelong passion had begun. I devoured Peter Beales' wonderful book *Classic Roses* – still the best on the subject – and he became my wise rose guru and, until his untimely death, my guiding rose spirit.

When we moved to Longmeadow, I dug up a few dozen of these roses and took them with me. Then I became severely depressed and did very little for a year or so. They were dark days. But my wife would pick small bunches of roses from the pots I'd not yet planted out and place them in vases before me: 'Tuscany Superb', 'Charles de Mills', 'Alba Semiplena', 'Celestial', 'Chapeau de Napoléon', 'Rose de Rescht' – those exquisite flowers lightened my deep darkness. In time, I planted them all out at Longmeadow and some remain more than 25 years later, still flowering.

Since then, I've acquired perhaps a couple of hundred different roses (I've never counted) and I love them all. They begin with the yellow species roses in the Spring Garden – *R. xanthina hugonis*, *R.* 'Cantabrigiensis' and *R. primula*. Each has their own character but all share the same characteristic display based upon single, pale-yellow flowers.

Ten years ago, I added 32 of my favourite shrub roses to the Cottage Garden, one in each corner of the eight square beds, a glorious, soft amalgamation of every shade of pink. You must keep faith with roses for a year or two. They should all be pruned hard on planting, which takes a bit of nerve, and for the first year or two the new growth will be too small and too sappy to satisfactorily carry the flowers, which, of course, like apples on a very young tree are all full size from year one. But by year three there is sufficient permanent structure to hold the flowers high and proud.

I also have a couple of beds of yellow-apricot roses: 'Agnes', The Pilgrim, Crown Princess Margareta and Charles Darwin. All are David Austin English roses that flower profusely, whereas most of the older roses flower once for about a month, with an occasional second flurry later in summer.

Let them be

I love the simplicity and purity of species roses, and have a couple of dozen different ones now in various parts of the garden, but especially in the Orchard Beds, where I want them to relate to the simplicity of the apple blossom. Some are very well known and straightforward, others slightly arcane, but all are entirely themselves, untouched by the guile of the breeder. The hand of man has never improved them. If they tangle and twist, then that is what they do. If they only flower for a few days, then that is unchangeable. This imbues them with a freshness and wildness that I love.

Monty enjoys two showings per year of his blood-red Moyes roses

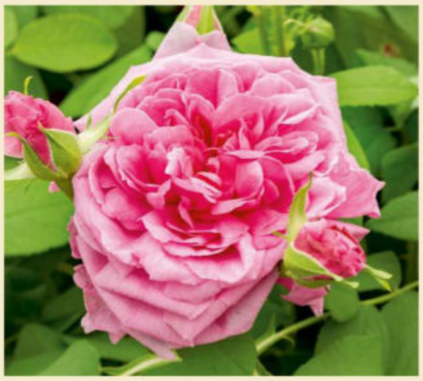
> “The hand of man has never improved them. If they tangle and twist, then that is what they do”

PHOTOS: ALAMY/ANDREW GREAVES, AVALON.RED, CHRIS BOSWORTH, FOTO-ZONE; PAUL DEBOIS; JASON INGRAM

In June, the Cottage Garden is festooned in bright pink, thanks to eye-catching varieties such as 'Complicata'

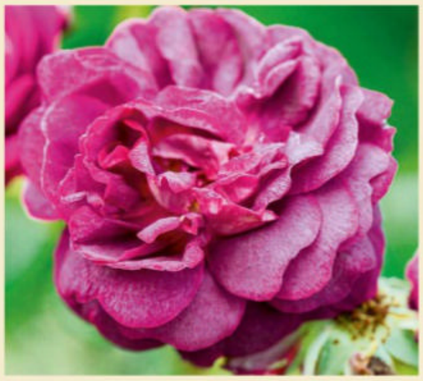
Monty's favourite roses

Looking for inspiration for your rose beds? Here are six of Monty's top old rose varieties: these ones have stood the test of time



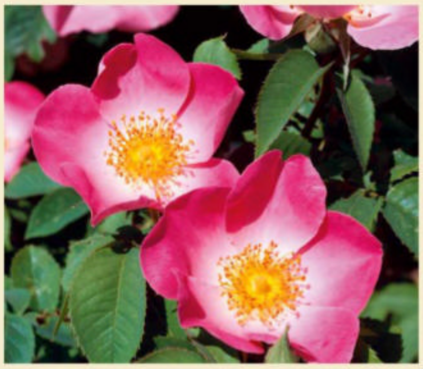
'Comte de Chambord'

A reliable old rose with a rich damask scent. It has an excellent disease resistance and will flower repeatedly through summer.
Height x Spread 1.2m x 90cm
Flowers Jul-Sep



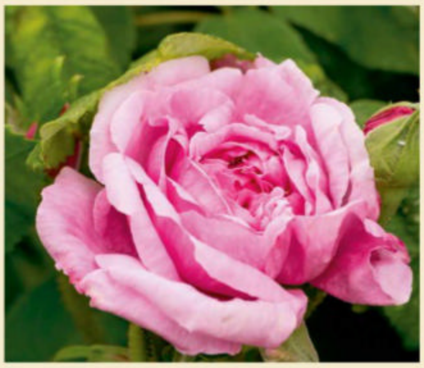
'William Lobb'

'William Lobb' has fully double, deep-crimson flowers on long arching stems, perfect for the back of a sunny border.
H x S 1.8m x 1.8m
F Jun-Jul



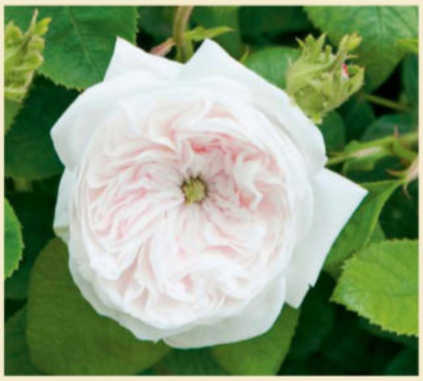
'Complicata'

A Gallica rose that is tough, vigorous and often disease free. It has one flush of bright rose-pink flowers in the summer.
H x S 3m x 2m
F Jun-Jul



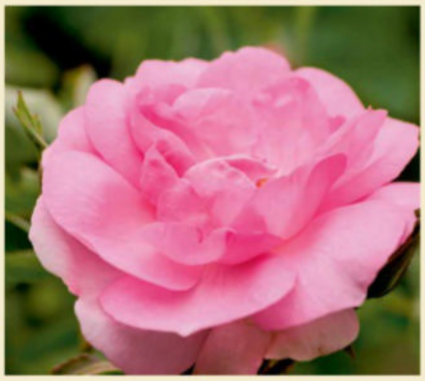
'Chapeau de Napoléon'

Its buds look like a tricorn hat – hence the name. Opens with fully double and richly fragrant, pink blooms.
H x S 1.25m x 1.25m
F Jul



'Madame Hardy'

Perhaps my favourite rose of all, 'Madame Hardy' is white with a green 'eye'. It has a strong, but not intrusive, scent.
H x S 1.5m x 1.2m
F Jul



'Céleste'

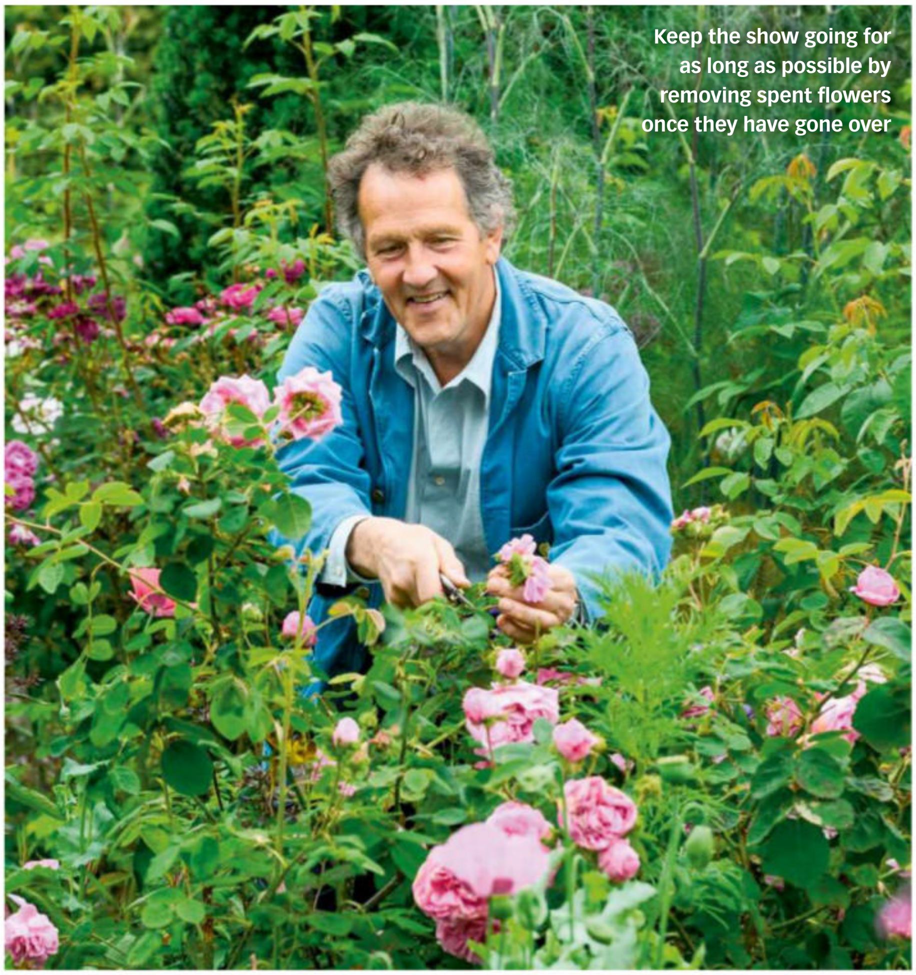
This is an alba variety with semi-double, light-pink flowers and a few yellow stamens in the centre.
H x S 1.2m x 1.2m
F Jun-Jul

> *"They show no signs of diminishing their performance"*

One of their great attractions for the gardener nervous about roses and the various problems they may have – from black spot to powdery mildew or rust – is that species roses are among the toughest plants in the garden, and will grow in almost any soil and any position. They hardly ever suffer from any of the afflictions that their more highly bred cousins suffer. I have had a pair of *R. moyesii* shrubs (to be honest, two groups of three, planted together) at the back of the Grass Borders that I planted back in 1997. I replace the old growth every few years by pruning the woodiest stems down to the ground, but they show no signs of diminishing their performance. Their glorious spangle of flowers spreads evenly across the large shrubs, like a blood-red stellar display. They then go on to have a second performance as the flowers convert into dramatic bottle-shaped orange hips, hanging like artfully placed decorations.

As well as *R. moyesii*, many of the species flowers turn into lovely, curvy hips. *R. rugosa* are like tomatoes, those of *R. spinosissima* are a deep brown and the fruits of *R. glauca* are bunched like grapes. If you want to make the most of these hips, then you should not prune until late winter – and then only to remove dead or damaged wood or to restrict the size.

If, however, you want to make the most of their flowers, the time to prune is immediately after flowering. But don't get in a state about it. Just cut out the dead wood, take off any crossing or damaged stems, or those that are becoming very old – taking them right back to ground level – and let the shrub get on with what it will do perfectly well without any help from even the most skilful of gardeners.



Keep the show going for as long as possible by removing spent flowers once they have gone over

Tie in or run free

I have planted climbing and rambling roses up most of the apple trees – including those in the Writing Garden – and, like the roses in the Cottage Garden, they took a while to perform. They can only get better and will see me out, even if I live to 100 – which I fully intend to do, gardening to the end!

There are two types of climbing roses: climbers and ramblers. The major difference between the two is how and when they flower. Climbers – like hybrid tea and most shrub roses – form their flowers on new wood that grows in spring, before flowering, whereas ramblers – like most species roses – do so on the growth that happened in the previous spring and summer.

Ramblers such as 'Paul's Himalayan Musk', 'Wedding Day' or 'Rambling Rector' make one gorgeous, frothy display of small flowers that are produced in clusters that only flower for four to six weeks during the summer. However, climbers, such as 'Madame Alfred Carrière', 'Zéphirine Drouhin' or 'Souvenir du Docteur Jamain', tend to have larger, individual flowers that will last for longer, and many repeat flower throughout much of summer. In general, climbers are much easier to train against a fence or wall, whereas most ramblers are happiest when they are left to scramble freely up a tree. ☐

Keep deadheading your roses

As the first flush of flowers starts to fade on your roses, it is important to deadhead them. This is a pruning rather than a tidying process, because it will stimulate the development of new sideshoots that will then produce further flowering buds, so it should be done with a pair of secateurs. Rather than just taking off the spent petals, cut back the flowered stem to just above a leaf or sideshoot, removing as much as is necessary.

BBC Gardeners' World Live

GWL on 12-15 June
Monty is on stage at Gardeners' World Live at the NEC Birmingham on Thu, Fri and Sat (12, 13 & 14 June)

PHOTOS: JASON INGRAM

NEXT MONTH Monty shares the summer sights, scents and sounds of Longmeadow

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GOING LIVE

Make a Metre Matter

As BBC Gardeners' World Live fast approaches, we talk to **Nick Bailey** about his headline show garden, The Plant-Based Garden, which promotes sustainability and links with our Make a Metre Matter campaign. Plus, we share highlights of what subscribers can expect at our flagship event…

"**To bring the Make a Metre Matter** campaign to life, I've designed a garden that has sustainability at its heart, with heaps of take-home inspiration. Although it's arranged as a series of vignettes, it holds together as one entity; for example, in the ornamental side, there are four ponds, three of which are exactly one square metre to show the range of species that can live happily in such a space. Introducing water into your garden can make a big difference, no matter what size it is, and I'm hoping we might start getting some wildlife interactivity before the show even opens.

"There are also square-metre plots of blocked planting that demonstrate how much you can pack in, and which plant associations work well in terms of colour and foliage. When you see the design on the plan, it looks like a game of Tetris© with all these interlinked metres in their various shapes and forms.

"On the productive side of the garden, there's a series of raised beds to demonstrate a variety of ways that you can use one square metre. For example, in one bed I show how a single courgette plant can supply you with 20-30 courgettes across the season. I've dedicated another bed to pollinators, which contains plants and other resources to suit 30-40 different pollinators across the year. I also have two one-square-metre plots each housing a compost bin, which will easily deal with a 100-150 square metre garden. Each of my garden's clearly delineated metres shows what you can achieve from it.

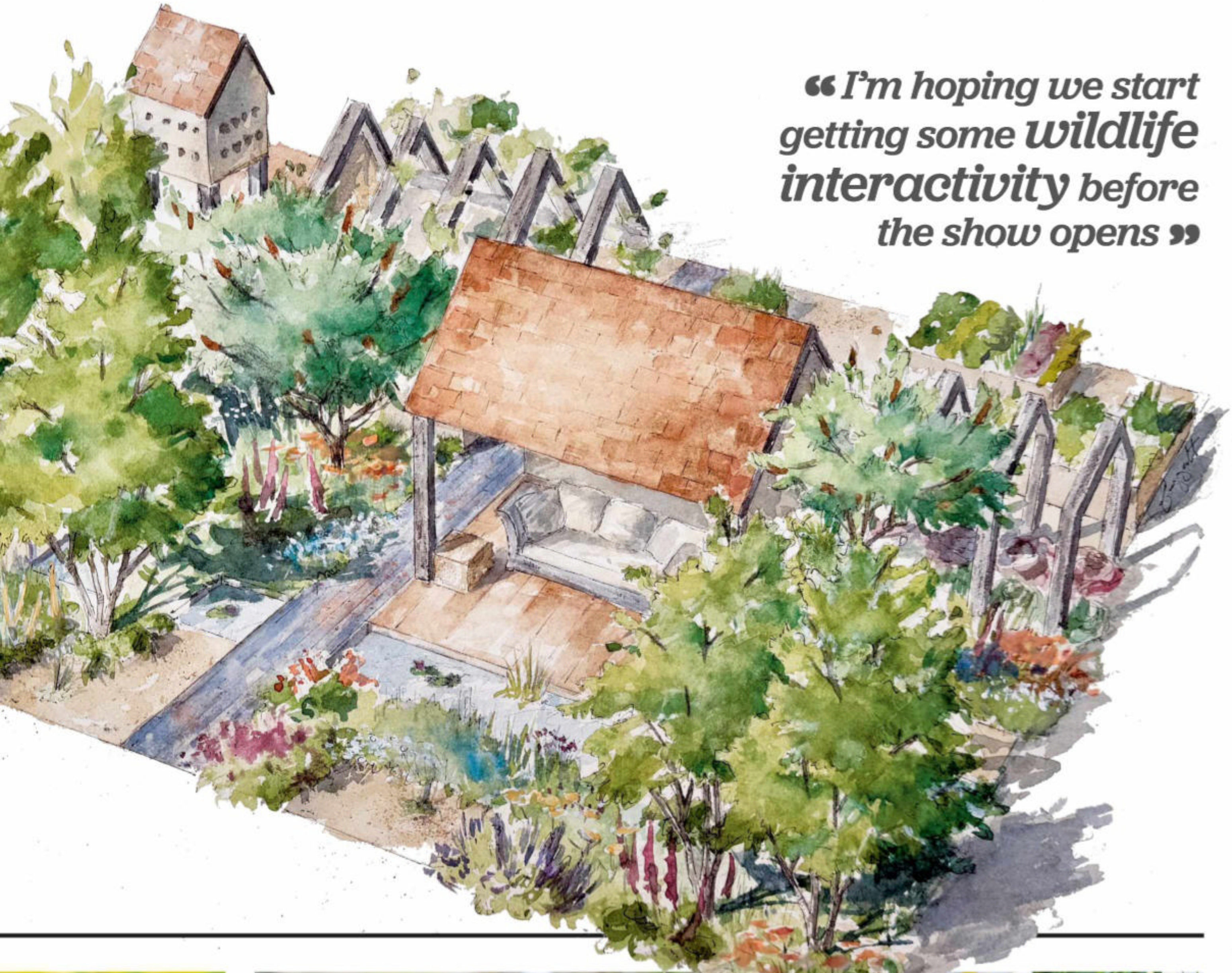
"Regarding my garden's aesthetic, the planting at the front is meadow-like with herbaceous plants in repeats, which is one of my obsessions. At the other side of the garden, beyond the barns, is the productive

Nick's show garden plants

Geum 'Mai Tai'

Campanula lactiflora

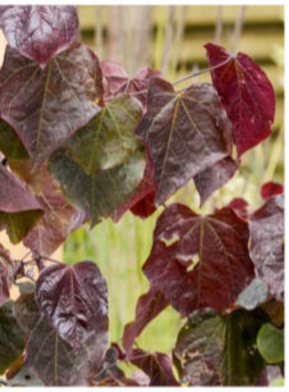
Cercis 'Forest Pansy'



> “I'm hoping we start getting some **wildlife interactivity** before the show opens”

Iris **'Kent Pride'**

***Echinacea* 'White Swan'**



***Sambucus* Black Lace**

Comfrey

area, where I've got willows and hazels growing, with a series of beds for cut flowers, veg, herbs and compost heaps. I have also planted comfrey and nettles, which will provide key nutrients to the soil.

"The colour theme running through the garden is one of pale blues, burgundies and apricots. A favourite plant of mine is *Geum* 'Mai Tai', which has a lovely, pale-peachy note and is pretty long flowering. There's also a plant that I don't think I've designed a garden without, *Campanula lactiflora*. It's a 90cm variety that will flower for a good two or three months. It doesn't need staking, it looks after itself and is just a good, reliable plant that you can divide after a few years.

"I've got the bearded iris 'Kent Pride', which is the opposite of everything else I've described. It doesn't flower for very long but when it does, it is spectacular, with colour that fuses in from the edge. The bulk of the petal is an off-white, with a tan, gingery edge that creeps in. It picks up the tones of the buildings beautifully and will repeat all the way through the planting. I'm also using a good range of shrubs as backdrop plants, with dark-leafed species that will complement the aesthetic of the barns and tie in with other buildings, such as the black-leafed *Sambucus* Black Lace and *Cercis canadensis* 'Forest Pansy', which has deep-burgundy leaves.

"I'd like the legacy of the garden to provoke a shift in people's thinking towards the idea that gardens can be made almost entirely of plants without the need for plastics, steel, glass or concrete, and that in a relatively small plot, it's possible to produce food nearly all year. I hope visitors will take inspiration from the one-square-metre theme that the garden embodies, demonstrating that it's possible to have ponds, veg beds, ornamental planting, herb gardens, cut flowers and even a meadow in the most compact of spaces." ☐

BBC Gardeners' World Live

■ **GWL** on 12-15 June
Hear **Nick** talk about his Headline Show Garden in the Theatre at BBC Gardeners' World Live (NEC, 12-15 June). Buy your tickets, with Theatre seats, now at **bbcgardenersworldlive.com**

GWL on TV

Gardeners' World will be filming from the show on Friday, 13 June.

BBC TWO

Other show highlights

Undecided whether to visit the show this year? Here are more highlights to whet your appetite...

■ **Best Buy stand**
Regular readers will be familiar with our Best Buy reviews, where our expert testers review popular garden tools and kit to identify the best products, with outstanding products receiving our coveted Best Buy badge. This year, GWL will feature a stand where you can check out some of our Best Buys and chat with our experts. Find it opposite the Subscriber Club Lounge in Hall 17. If you're a subscriber, check out the exclusive Best Buy offers – and remember to bring your voucher with you!

■ **Adam Frost's Tasting Table**
is a unique, interactive and exclusive new gardening and gastronomy experience. Here, Adam brings garden flavours to life with culinary experts and guest chefs from Good Food Show Summer and *Good Food Magazine*.

■ **BBC Gardeners' World Live Theatre** features entertaining gardening chat with Monty Don, Adam Frost, Nick Bailey, Frances Tophill, Rachel De Thame and Sue Kent. Hosted by broadcaster Nicki Chapman and *GW Magazine*'s Content Director, Kevin Smith.

■ **Inspiring Show Gardens**
including the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity Medicinal Garden, which reflects the vital role that the charity

Meet Frances Tophill on Saturday

Monty will be on stage Thursday to Saturday

Be inspired by Beautiful Borders

Meet our experts to discuss the latest gardening equipment

plays in saving lives. This garden will be relocated to the new Midlands Air Ambulance site at Shifnal in Shropshire.

- **Pip Probert's Make a Metre Matter Collection** brings plenty of small-space ideas to life. The award-winning designer's offering includes a pollinator patch, a mini pond and a compost heap.
- **Beautiful Borders** are inspiring plots that show how to get big impact from a small space. This year's theme is Cultivating Connections.
- **The Green Rooms** area is a haven for indoor-plant lovers, featuring plant-packed stalls, pots and accessories, with expert plant-care advice, talks and workshops.
- **Indoor and outdoor shopping areas**, where hundreds of retailers will be selling garden accessories, tools, equipment and furniture, as well as a huge array of plants in the Floral Marquee, Plant Village and Green Rooms.

Gardeners' World magazine
Subscriber CLUB

Your Subscriber Club Lounge

If you're a *BBC Gardeners' World* *Magazine* subscriber and coming to the show, don't forget to visit us in the lounge. Conveniently located adjacent to the Gardeners' World Theatre, the lounge offers you the perfect opportunity to relax while watching your favourite experts.

Hosted by our content team, we have a variety of exclusive sessions in the lounge. These include interviews and chats about Make a Metre Matter, a few special appearances when some of your favourite TV experts join us (check the lounge blackboard on the day), and conversations with brilliant gardening experts from the region as part of our 2 for 1 Gardens scheme.

Look out for your vouchers with your show tickets, which include:

- **entry** for you and three guests to enjoy access to the lounge
- **10%** off hot and cold refreshments
- **exclusive** discounts on our Best Buys – take advantage of the special offers that are available only to subscribers

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Not a subscriber? Visit our subscription stand at the show or turn to **page 26** now to subscribe!

Find out more about the show, timetables and Best Buy offers at:

bbcgardenersworldlive.com/club-lounge

We look forward to seeing you there!

June is a favourite time of year for Sue, when her roses fill the garden with their fragrances

Cultivating joy

Part 2 Scent

Looking for scented summer plants that are easy to care for and bring wellbeing and happiness? Let **Sue Kent** be your guide

PHOTOS JASON INGRAM

> “I’ve tried to weave as many fragrant plants as possible into beds, borders and containers”

I spend a lot of time in my garden, which can require much effort, but I remind myself that with hard work comes big rewards and for me one of the greatest joys is the cultivation of scented plants, carefully located around the garden.

Smells can also be highly evocative as they are linked with the part of the brain that stores our memories and, to that effect, I’ve tried to weave in as many fragrant plants as I can into beds, borders and containers.

While the sense of smell can decline with age for some, it can also be strengthened by giving it a regular workout, breathing in different scents for 10 to 20 seconds each. In this way, my garden is like an outdoor gym for the nose, providing a pleasurable and positive boost for mind, body, and soul.

I grew up with scent being a motivator to spend time in the garden. My father planted a pink rose under my childhood bedroom window to flower on my birthday, and special tours from both mum and dad of all the roses in our garden to appreciate their beauty and scent was an annual affair. Outside, in between pavers on our south-facing patio, my mum planted a fragrant yellow broom, which grew so big it could not be avoided when walking around the patio – and what a treat that was! Although I haven’t had success growing this in my current garden, whenever I come across it elsewhere, I’m instantly transported back to my happy days as a child outside.

Today, another pink rose, the thornless ‘Zéphirine Drouhin’, takes pride of place by my kitchen door, which leads straight onto an outdoor dining area. When in bloom it

brings energy to the beginning of every day with its dynamic fruity fragrance. Its arresting colour also means I can't help but stop, smell, and breathe in the joy.

Another scented rose, 'Albéric Barbier', with its light fragrance, yellow petals and evergreen leaves rambles along the wall by my art shed and has inspired many a painting and bouquet. Since finding the perfect pair of long-handled cut-and-reach pruners at a garden show (a bit like a helping hand device, but for cutting stems at a distance) I've also been able to eliminate the risk of getting too close to the thorny disposition of many a perfumed rose, a risk that increases due to having to lean closer into plants with my shorter arms. I've since acquired more than 25 varieties, including the creamy whites of 'Esme' and 'Summer Memories', and the abundant scented blooms of apricot 'Sweet Honey'. These roses are especially rewarding in June, when their subtle, intertwined perfume enriches the whole garden, making it one of my favourite times of year.

This is also when my lilac starts to bloom, a highlight of the olfactory plant calendar. These blooms are not around for long, but the tantalising scent is divine and, as the flowers are edible (do not eat other parts of the plant), they can be used to create memorably perfumed sugar or syrup, or to add fragrant garnishes to food.

ABOVE Snip off the leaves from scented pelargoniums – they respond well to regular trimming

RIGHT Bring scent to boundaries with star jasmine, which thrives on a warm sunny wall or fence

A journey for the senses

I love a light flowery bouquet but sometimes find stronger scents harder to handle – the

headache-inducing scent of Oriental lilies indoors for one! But outside in the garden, the heady fragrance of plants such as star jasmine, *Trachelospermum jasminoides*, and the flowers of mature cordyline add magic to the summer evening air.

Like perfume, this is all a matter of personal preference however, so let your intuition and memory guide you on a journey to the most joyful scents for you. On my way to the greenhouse and indeed around the garden, it's the lingering scent of nectar-rich honeysuckle that does it for me.

While big, beautiful blooms are obviously irresistible, more unobtrusive sensory delights often require a passing touch to release their spicy aroma. This includes herbs such as oregano, which grows profusely in my garden,

ABOVE Collecting sprigs of lavender and oregano to bring fragrance indoors

My 5 favourite scented plants

I include a host of scented plants in my garden, but there are some fragrant favourites that I would never be without:

- **Lavender**

Lavender (*Lavandula spp.*) is essential in my garden – its scent calms my busy mind. I cut the long stems back to the silver leaves, and turn them upside down to dry. I use the dried flowerheads in lavender bags, and tie up stems to make fragrant firelighters for winter.

- **Lemon verbena**

Lemon verbena (*Aloysia citrodora*) thrives in my virtually frost-free garden. I grow it in my sunny borders and make lemon verbena and mint iced tea from the fresh leaves. The leaves can also be used as a replacement for lemon grass in curry paste.

- ***Pelargonium* 'Attar of Roses'**

I grow *Pelargonium* 'Attar of Roses' in terracotta pots on a southeast window and in the greenhouse over winter. The leaves smell like Turkish Delight. Pop a few leaves in when cooking berries and plums for extra flavour.

- **Scented roses**

Scented roses (*Rosa spp.*) are only outnumbered by hydrangeas in my garden. To prolong the enjoyment of the roses I use a dehydrator to dry the flowerheads or petals. I like combining them with other dried flowers to remind me of summer during the winter.

- **Star jasmine**

Trachelospermum jasminoides grows up the east-facing wall of our house by our outdoor eating area. Its leaves are useful for covering unsightly walls and the flowers smell similar to the honeyed scent of the true jasmine, *Jasminum officinale*, which I also love.

Stop and smell the roses

Reap the benefits from the scented plants and flowers in your garden – here are my top tips on making the most of them

- **Let scented plants** and flowers motivate you to enjoy a daily walk around your garden
- **Don't forget to stop**, get close to the scent and breathe in – closing your eyes can help
- **Pick flowers** from the garden and bring indoors, to add mood-boosting fragrance to your home
- **Flavour food** and drinks with scented edibles such as lemon verbena and mint
- **Place scented** plants near dining or seating areas to create a relaxing ambience
- **Grow fragrant** plants by doors and windows to allow scent to drift into the house
- **Weave scented** plants and flowers throughout your whole garden to spread the joy
- **Use containers** for fragrant plants if space is limited – there's a scented plant for every location
- **Cover walls** and fences with scented climbing or rambling plants, to help infuse the air with fragrance
- **Attract pollinators** – some plants use scent to attract specific insects to their flowers, from bees to beetles

ABOVE Sue harvests the leaves of lemon verbena to make a reviving tea

BELOW *Rosa* 'Sweet Honey', a floribunda rose with clusters of scented flowers

the fragrant flowers and leaves of which I use for culinary purposes or added to a vase. Just breathing in the aroma of the leaves makes me hungry and sends me into my greenhouse to be intoxicated further by the smell of tomato plants. Eaten fresh from the vine, home-grown tomato salad with chopped oregano leaves never fails to induce a massive sense of satisfaction. Lavender placed strategically near my hammock means I can pick a few aromatic stems to enjoy while I rest in the afternoon. This has the added sensory bonus of watching and listening to the bees that share in my enjoyment of this popular scented delight.

And let's not forget the enveloping effect of a scented hedge, such as the well-established privet, *Ligustrum ovalifolium*, that encloses my front garden. When I first moved here 35 years ago this evergreen stalwart was trimmed in early summer until I realised that it produced small highly scented white flowers in midsummer if we left it unchecked. Now, I wait and prune it after nesting time and we have a garden edged with flowers and scent. After nesting time is better for the birds, and the bees are happy too.

Cultivating joy for people and wildlife through scent is perhaps the biggest pleasure.

Listen to Sue talking about using the garden for self-care in the **Spring Conversations series**

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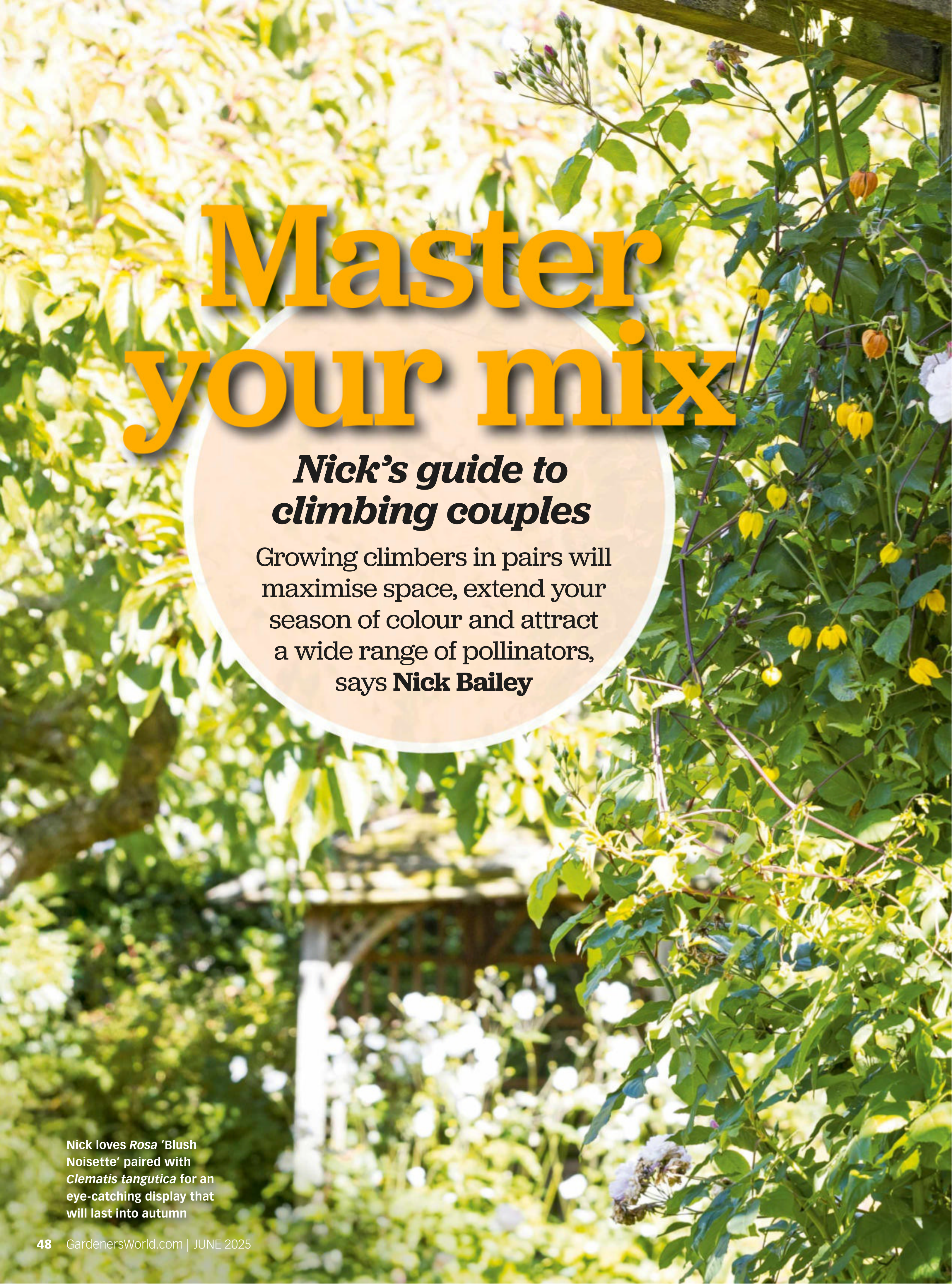
Master your mix

Nick's guide to climbing couples

Growing climbers in pairs will maximise space, extend your season of colour and attract a wide range of pollinators, says **Nick Bailey**



Nick loves *Rosa* 'Blush Noisette' paired with *Clematis tangutica* for an eye-catching display that will last into autumn

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In the wild, climbing plants often grow together naturally. You've only got to look at a British woodland to see the native honeysuckle and clematis in a wild tangle of scent and colour. And more widely around the world, from tropical forest to Mediterranean climes, climbing species combine of their own volition.

When it comes to growing this way, we gardeners can take our cues from the wild. There are many advantages, for example, a carefully paired set of early- and late-flowering climbers can extend the season by three months or more, while flower colours can be enhanced, set off or contrasted by the complimentary tones of another plant. Weaker climbing plants can get support and protection from a larger established climber while established climbers with bare lower stems can be flanked by shorter climbers that will hide their leggy limbs. Pollinators are also well served by having a double whammy of two plants in flower together or a pairing that will provide nectar across many months. While all these benefits are very welcome, making these pairings work successfully calls for specific plants for specific situations.

Bare bottoms!

Many mature climbers can become bare at the base, with little on show other than grey-brown leafless stems. This is often the case with established wisteria and roses that are attached to walls with vine eyes, straining wire or trellis.

Addressing the situation is as simple as using a shorter climber, such as a *Clematis viticella*, to hide the established wisteria's leafless base. The clematis blooms later in the season and requires an annual prune to around 30cm from the ground, which prevents a long-term tangle. Bare-based roses call for slightly shorter climbers with fairly low nutrition needs, such as the annual yellow-flowered *Tropaeolum peregrinum*.

Add flowers to foliage

Some of the most useful climbers have fabulous foliage but insignificant flowers. This can be remedied by adding a floriferous climber to a foliage-focused one; for example, the zingy gold foliage of the very fast-growing *Humulus lupulus* 'Aureus' combined with the violet blooms of the annual *Ipomoea purpurea* or one of its electric-pink cultivars make a dramatic colour combination. Grow the pair on a trellis or use tall straining wires on a wall or fence.

Alternatively, if you have an established large-leafed ivy (*Hedera colchica*) self-clinging to a wall or fence, then add the tender *Cobaea scandens*. Available in either purple or white cup-and-saucer shaped flowers, it happily twines through the ivy, adding an extra layer of interest.

Annual pairings

A fun pairing project is growing various annual climbers together in a pot with a conical support, on a wall or over a pergola. Choose plants with equal vigour so one does not smoother the other and you'll have a summer-long display.

Position Climbers, like the honeysuckle behind these pink pelargoniums, add vertical interest

Honeysuckle and *Clematis viticella*

Good form Flower form provides a contrast, using plants from two different families

Humulus lupulus* 'Aureus' and *Ipomoea purpurea

Stage setter Lime green makes a bold backdrop in this hop and morning glory climbing combination

PHOTOS: TORIE CHUGG; SARAH CUTTLE; PAUL DEBOIS; GETTY/PATCHARAMAI VUTIPAPORNKUL; NEIL HEPWORTH (LOCATION: BARNSDALE GARDENS); JASON INGRAM

This idea works well with various pairings of morning glory – a pink and pale-blue combination is particularly lovely. Or try grouping rhodochiton's burgundy blooms with the peachy tones of *Thunbergia* 'African Sunset'.

Colour and longevity

For long-lasting colour, display and nectar availability, you can't beat a clematis and rose pairing. Grown on straining wires, a pergola or a trellis, they will bloom from May to November. Or try a repeat-flowering rose such as the pale pink The Generous Gardener, which can bloom throughout spring and summer, with a long-flowering viticella clematis such as *C*. 'Étoile Violette'.

By either starting two new climbers together or adding to an existing one, you can generate exciting colour combinations and flowering longevity. Plant creamy holboellia at the same time and in the same spot as the pale-violet *Solanum crispum* 'Glasnevin', and grow them on trellis or horizontal straining wires on vine eyes. Or pair the pale-yellow blooms of the twining climber *Jasmine officinale* 'Devon Cream' with the yellow, orange and red flowers of *Ipomoea lobata* – it's an eye-catching combination that pollinators will love, feeding them for around five months. ☐

Holboellia and *Solanum jasminoides* 'Glasnevin'

Stalwart Clematis 'Étoile Violette' will keep the colour going when nearby blooms have faded

Three perfect pairs

There are so many combinations you could experiment with, but I've picked these three duos for colours that work beautifully together, their incredible climbing power and blooms that keep on coming until autumn.

■ *Rosa* 'New Dawn' and *Clematis* 'Perle d'Azur'

I adore this combination (pictured right) and so did Gertrude Jekyll who originated the pairing. The clematis's pale watery blue with the rose's delicate pink is just magical and could not be more romantic. They work so well together. Neither is rampant enough to smother the other and they both keep the colour coming. The rose is first into bloom but it's quickly followed by the clematis. One or both are in flower through summer and early autumn. Give them a sunny 3m x 3m wall space if you can.

■ *C. tangutica* and *C.* 'Étoile Violette'

If dramatic colour is your thing, then this is the combination to go for. The hues of these two clematis sit on opposite sides of the colour wheel, which means that as contrasting colours they look richer and more vibrant when grown together. Their forms also make for an exciting contrast, with their large and small blooms. Grow them in full sun on a pergola, up a tree or on a wall where there is space for them to rampage and you'll have an eye-catching display from July to October.

■ *Wisteria floribunda* and *Eccremocarpus scaber*

One of the largest and most rampant garden climbers, wisteria produces an extraordinary display of hanging flowers in late spring or summer. But these only last three weeks, so add a companion to provide colour once the wisteria fades. There are several species that work here, but my favourite is *Eccremocarpus scaber*, which has a foliage so fine that it won't compromise its host. It comes in many colours, including yellow, burgundy, orange and white, and will bloom from early summer – just as the wisteria fades – until October, when it will have climbed three or more metres.

A classic combination, roses and clematis look great together and have similar growing needs

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Nick appears every day.

PHOTOS: ALAMY/BIOSPHOTO; JONATHAN BUCKLEY; PAUL DEBOIS; GETTY/EVE LIVESEY

NEXT MONTH Nick explores meadow-style matrix planting of grasses and flowering perennials

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My passion for pink!

Varied, versatile, vivid or understated, pink plants fit into any colour scheme. **Carol Klein** shares her passion and picks her favourites

At Glebe Cottage, Carol combines cranesbill, salvias, foxgloves and others to create a vivid palette of pinks

> “In our gardens, pink can take on a plethora of connotations and create different kinds of moods and effects”

PHOTO: JONATHAN BUCKLEY

Unless you are a 'foliagephile', or insist on displaying nothing but cool blues or sunset tones of red, orange and yellow, you are almost certainly growing one or probably more plants in your garden whose flowers are pink. Why is pink such a popular colour in our plots? For a start, it fits in easily. It is a sociable colour, unless you're straying into its extremes (vivid magenta comes to mind), and it is a flower colour that is easy on the eye and extremely versatile. It is difficult to make it clash – possibly the most grating combinations are between different pinks rather than between pink and other colours.

Nowadays pink is thought of as a feminine colour, girly even. Can you see Barbie in anything but pink? It wasn't until the mid-twentieth century that the swing from pink as a boy's colour to a girl's colour and vice-versa, came about. The pink triangle was originally used as a badge of shame by the Nazis to identify homosexuals and was later adopted by the LGBT+ community as a symbol of pride.

Romance and theatre

In our gardens, pink can take on a plethora of connotations and create different kinds of moods and effects. Used with white it can lend a romantic feel, add crimson and you introduce theatre into the proceedings. Here at Glebe Cottage, one area is called 'Alice's Garden', named for our youngest daughter. Pink, white and crimson are colours she loves (mix crimson and white and you get pink).

Although, as in most gardens, the predominant colour is green, this green foliage is a perfect foil for the pink combinations. Astrantias abound; the bracts of *Astrantia major*, aka Aunt Hattie's pincushion or melancholy gentleman, are green and white, but in many selections and cultivars, pink creeps into its colouring.

There are many newer cultivars whose crimson flower colour is deeper and more mysterious, and there are examples of the whole range within this garden. Perhaps the pinkest astrantia in modern gardens is 'Roma' (see right), which has a different species, *Astrantia maxima* hailing from Turkey and the Middle East, as one parent.

Alongside the astrantias, several geraniums hold sway, mainly forms of *Geranium* x *oxonianum,* including one with pretty pale-pink flowers and bronze leaves edged with green. There are white and

> “Pink is a sociable colour, unless you stray into its extremes”

PHOTOS: ALAMY/ANDREW LAWSON; ASHWOOD NURSERIES; SARAH CUTTLE; PAUL DEBOIS; GETTY/FRANCISCO LANCHO, ALEX MANDERS; JASON INGRAM

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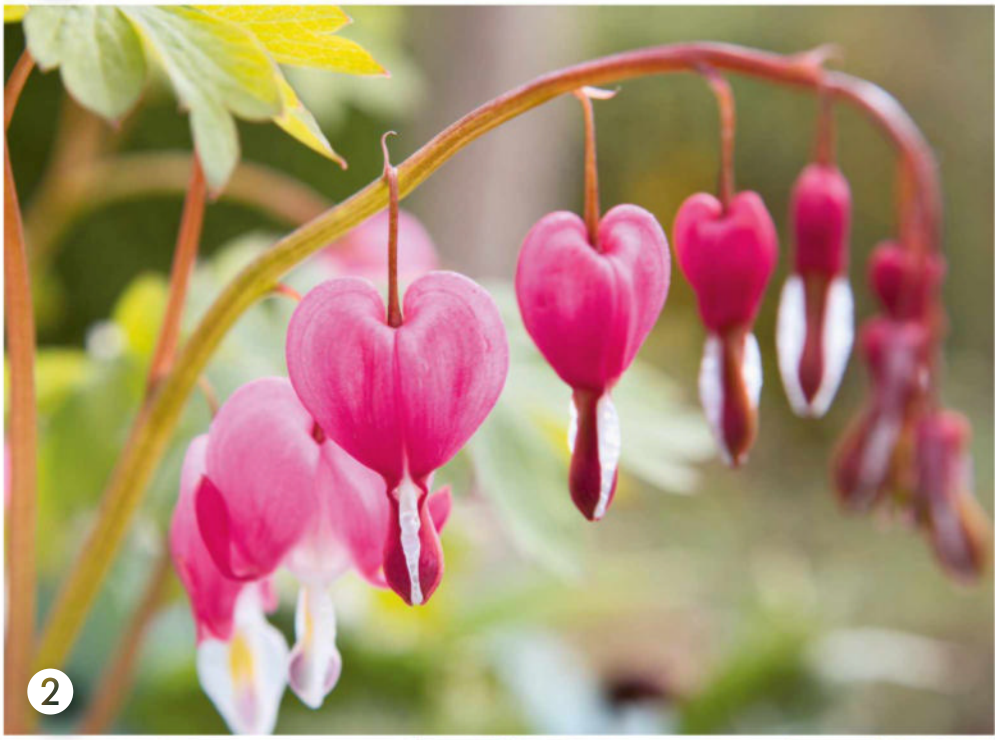
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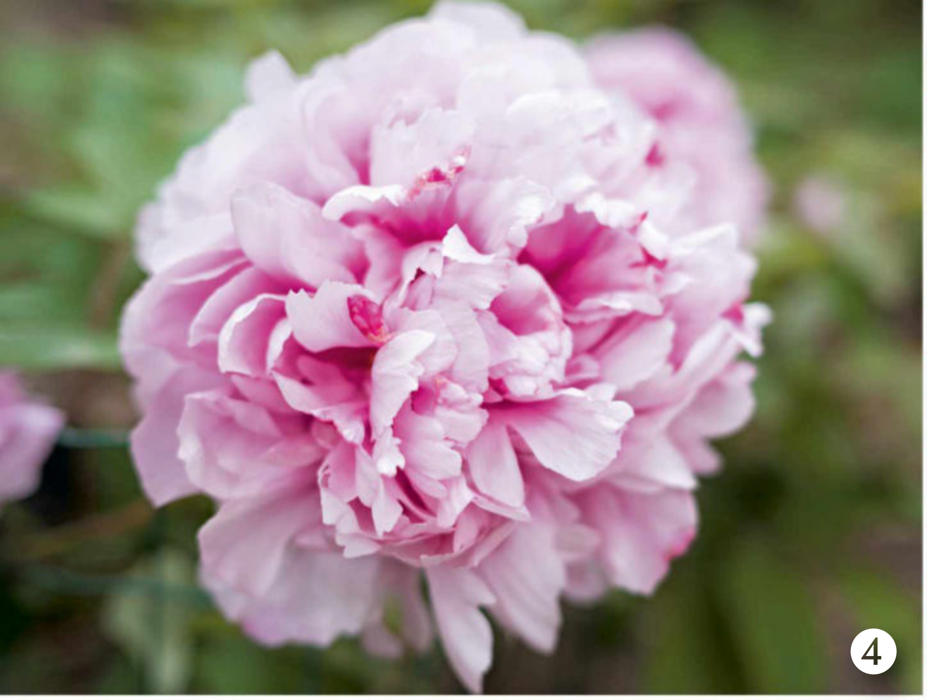
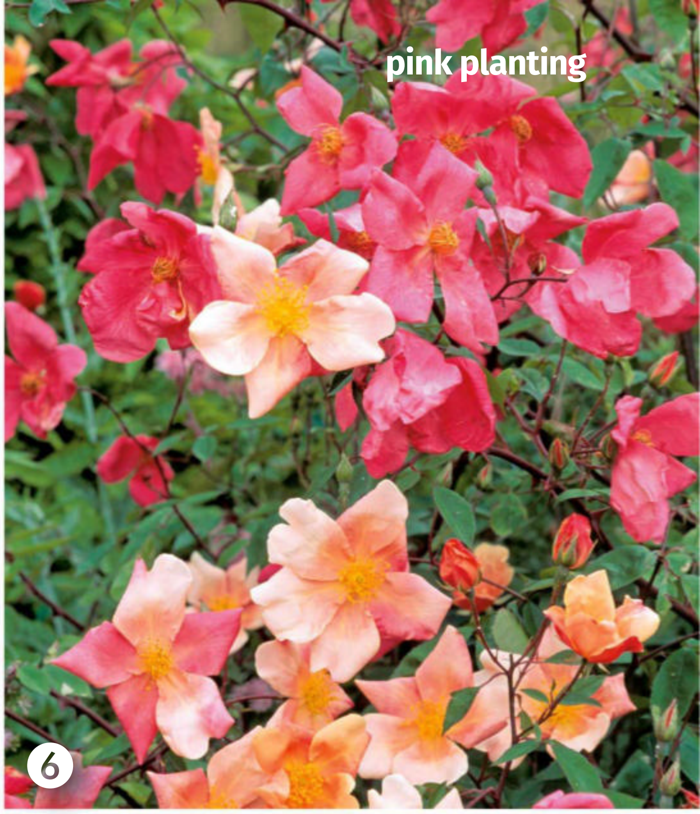
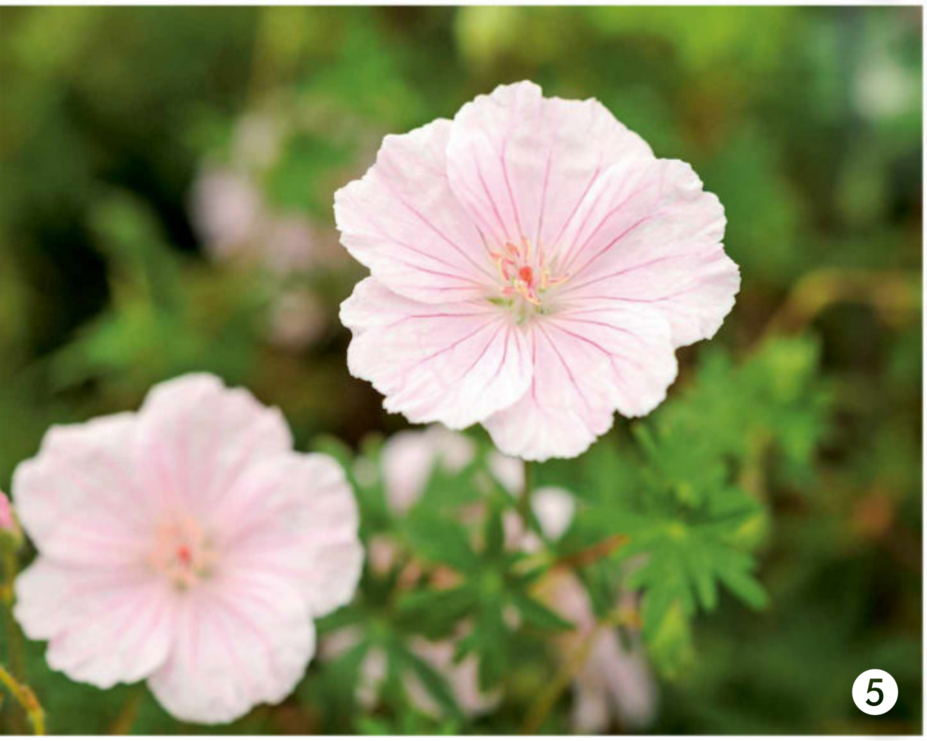
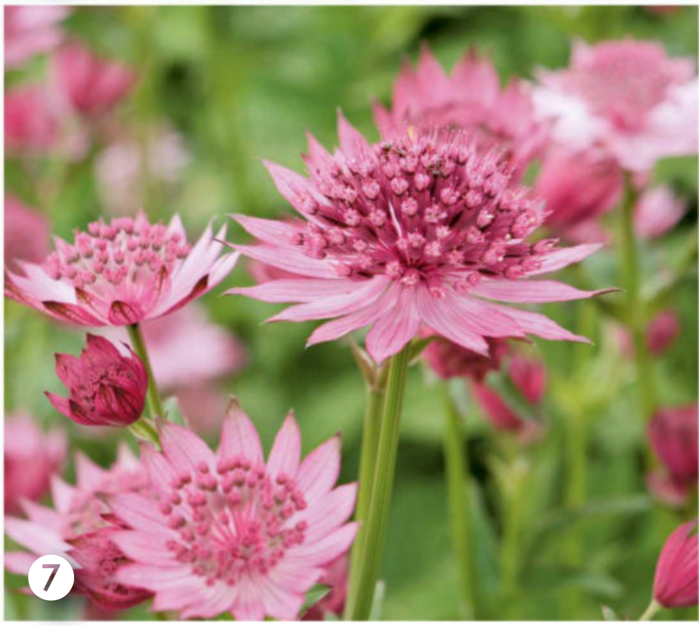








10 of Carol's favourite pink plants

① ***Helleborus x hybridus* Ashwood Evolution Group**
Developed by Ashwood Nurseries in an ongoing breeding programme with thousands of crosses, there are some astonishing colours resulting, including many beautiful pinks and apricots.

② ***Lamprocapnos spectabilis***
A plant from Asia, long in cultivation and known by many common names including bleeding heart and lady in the bath, turn the locket-shaped flowers upside down, press the side petals and the lady pops up from her bath. An elegant springtime plant.

③ ***Dianthus* Tickled Pink or Lily the Pink**
I have to include the real pink – *Dianthus*. The genus is very varied, including border pinks like those pictured to tiny alpines, not to mention *Dianthus barbatus,* the sweet William. Almost all are pink and scented.

④ ***Paeonia lactiflora* 'Sarah Bernhardt'**
Possibly the most voluptuous of all the lactiflora peonies, with a profusion of pretty pink petals and perfect perfume. Tall and upstanding, its heavy flowers may need support. Always plant peonies with their crowns no deeper than a couple of inches below soil level.

⑤ ***Geranium sanguineum* var. *striatum***
Used to be called *G. lancastriense*. It comes from Walney Island, where we once filmed it for *Gardeners' World* TV, growing in sand dunes, which tells you all you need to know about its suitability for dry sunny sites.

⑥ ***Rosa* x *odorata* 'Mutabilis'**
One of the most captivating of all roses. Of Chinese descent, its cultivar name describes the way the colour of its petals changes – through pinks to apricot. Single flowers are great for pollinators and it can be in flower right through the year.

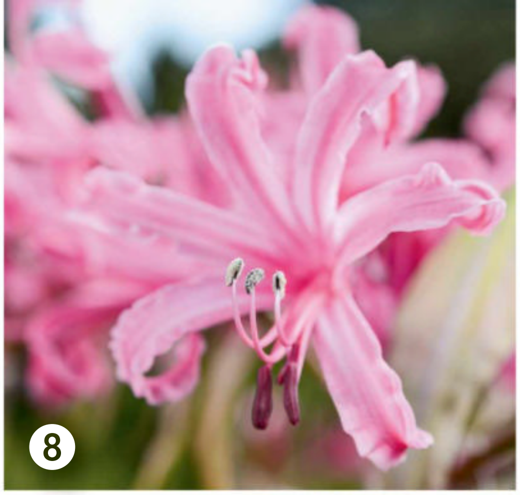
⑦ ***Astrantia* 'Roma'**
One of the most useful and beautiful of all astrantias. Since it does not set seed, its papery pink bracts persist for ages though it is worth removing them eventually to encourage further flowering. Increase by division.

Continues over…

⑧ *Nerine* x *bowdenii*
South African bulb with iridescent petals of shocking pink, all the more noticeable in the garden because of their late flowering. There are many varieties, some in softer pink, others more luminous, and there are now amarines, hybrids of *Amaryllis* and *Nerine*, that are even more showy and almost all pink!

⑨ *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae* 'Harrington's Pink'
One of the prettiest of the New England asters. Most of its brethren have blue in their colouring, but this is pure pink. No problems with mildew but best planted with tallish groundcover to hide its bare legs.

⑩ *Hesperantha coccinea* 'Wilfred H. Bryant'
From South Africa again and at its best when the rest of the garden is going to sleep. Big, palest-pink starry flowers and straight sword-like leaves. To do its best it needs fertile soil with reasonable moisture.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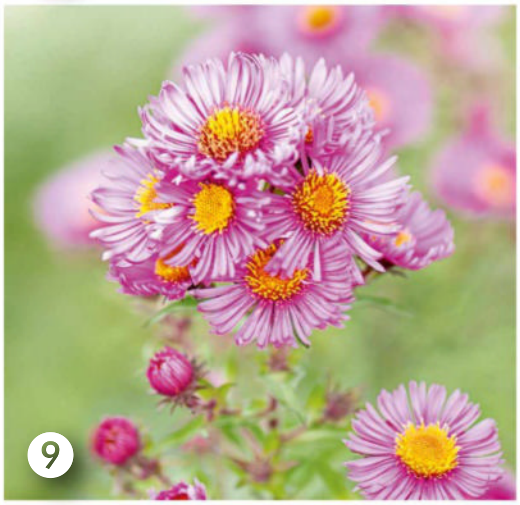
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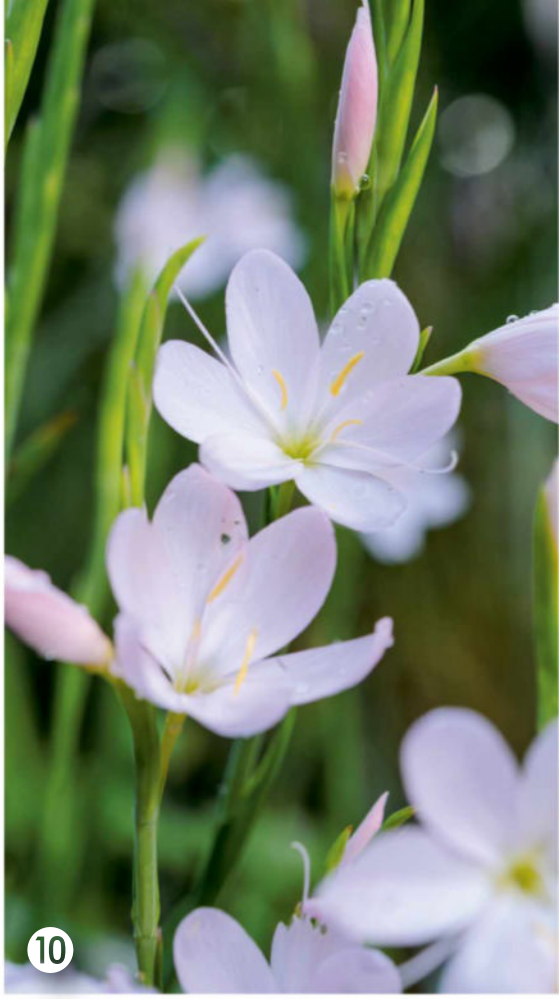
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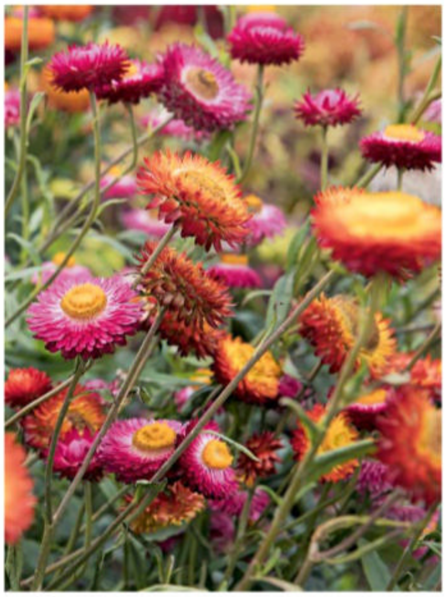
pale pink poppies and clouds of *Eurybia divaricata* and umbels – especially the pink form of *Pimpinella major*.

The whole is harmonious, all the pinks here are somewhere between white and crimson, then suddenly a discordant note is struck by the flowers of *Geranium nodosum,* which seeds itself all around our garden and pushes up throughout this planting. Its flower colour varies, ranging from magenta to a pale shade that some would call pink.


Shocking shades of pink combine with brilliant oranges to startling effect in this *Xerochrysum bracteatum* mix

PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; GETTY/JACKY PARKER; JASON INGRAM

> “And here is the dilemma, what is pink? For me, pink excludes any hint of blue”

Determining pink

And here is the dilemma, what is pink? For me, pink excludes any hint of blue and yet for many gardeners purpley-pink with blue in it still constitutes pink. Take the aforementioned *Geranium nodosum*: when it seeds itself in the garden below Alice's, which is called Annie's garden after our eldest daughter, it looks much more at home. Here there are veronicastrums, and blue and purple autumnal asters. The rose which runs through these beds is a moss rose, *Rosa* 'William Lobb', a heavily scented magenta-coloured rose whose petal colour fades to purple as it ages.

Years ago, when *Gardeners' World* TV used to get all its presenters to make a one-hour special, I was lucky enough to make one on colour and, as part of it, we filmed a piece at Glebe Cottage where we collected together all the pink flowers we could find. There must have been at least a score, as diverse and discordant as can be, but they could be separated into two groups: those in which blue played a part, and those with no trace of blue. Yet put together blue flowers – campanulas or geraniums, for example – with either group and the marriage is a happy one. For lovers of pastels, the more white there is within the pink or blue, the better and softer the effect.

For those who want their plantings noticed, shocking pink (a colour named by Italian fashion designer Elsa Schiaparelli) is made all the more shocking by combining it with brilliant orange – so much the better if the two colours are the same tone. The volume of colour is important, too. Green should be almost invisible for the most outrageous effect, perhaps most easily achievable in a container – orange begonias and vivid pink petunias perhaps, such as *Petunia* Supertunia Vista Bubblegum?

Each to their own. It is worth experimenting with pink though, and trying it in different combinations and, as with all flowers, trying to ensure that there is pollen and nectar available throughout the year. ☐

Listen to Carol's plant combinations podcast at **GardenersWorld.com/podcast**

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‘Could you home a National Plant Collection to help ensure that different plant groups remain in cultivation for future generations to enjoy?’

Barbara Segall is a garden writer and author of *The Secret Gardens of the South East.* Also see **thegardenpost.substack.com** and **@barbarasegall**

When Sarah Cook VMH retired from her role as Head Gardener at Sissinghurst Castle in 2004, she returned to Hadleigh in Suffolk, where she grew up. Happily, she landed on a retirement project to search out the bearded irises bred by a fellow former Hadleigh resident, the artist Sir Cedric Morris.

Sarah has located some 30 of the 95 ‘missing’ named irises that Morris bred at his home in Benton End – many of them named for his friends and pets, such as ‘Benton Baggage’ (a cat) and ‘Benton Rubeo’ (a pet macaw) – and she now holds the Plant Heritage Historic Collection of *Iris* (Sir Cedric Morris introductions). And in May 2025, Sarah took the irises, alongside *The Iris Florilegium of Sir Cedric Morris*, created by award-winning botanical artists, to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show.

Meanwhile, a Suffolk wholesale grower, Howard Nurseries, has been growing them commercially and they are now available to buy from several retail outlets. Many are also back at Benton End where they were first conjured into life. And the space is now being renewed by the Garden Museum as a place of art and horticulture, learning and friendship, as it was in Morris’s lifetime. A clear win for the plants and the people!

There are now more than 720 National Plant Collections, together holding around 95,000 plants – living libraries as it were – that can be visited on special open days or by arrangement. From *Abies* to *Zelkova*, via *Dahlia* and *Rosa*, they’re grown in gardens, greenhouses, allotments and homes, as well as in botanical gardens, plant nurseries and even a women’s prison and a pub garden.

All these collections are facilitated by Plant Heritage (plantheritage.org.uk), which came into being to help conserve garden plants, and their place in history, for future gardeners. First set up in 1978 as the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens – at a time when the nursery trade was cutting back on the breadth and depth of their stock, and many botanic institutions were also reducing their cultivated collections and concentrating on wild-sourced material – Plant Heritage’s continued aim has been to rediscover and reintroduce lost varieties, and make sure, through propagation and distribution, that they’re grown as widely as possible. And the role of gardens and gardeners is key.

While garden plants may come and go – trends, fashion, a fall from favour, pests, diseases and climate change are all factors that can take them out of circulation – knowing their history, origins and provenance tells us what made them popular and may also offer clues as to why they fell from garden grace, or what made a new plant come along to take their place.

> *“There are now more than 720 National Plant Collections, holding a living library of around 95,000 plants, from Abies to Zelkova”*

Plant collections are needed to conserve this knowledge, but what drives someone to start or build one up? Like a stamp collection, it may be a wish to get the whole set, but a plant collection is living and the challenges of nurturing and maintaining it must be considered carefully before signing up. A passion for plants is key, and as this is a formally accredited scheme, there are basic requirements, including a dedicated space to grow three of each plant, a background knowledge and the ability to keep clear and accurate records. There are also different types and levels of collection to suit experienced or professional gardeners, or for plant enthusiasts to step in and hold.

One option is to be a Plant Guardian, where you look after just one or two plants that are rare or endangered, or only listed for sale by one or two nurseries. Plant Heritage then endeavours to make sure that these plants are propagated and distributed to its members through the annual Plant Exchange. A searchable list of Guardian Plants now numbers around 2,675 plants and rising.

For my part, I’ve been involved with the Suffolk Plant Heritage Group since its inception 45 years ago, and have often pondered the idea of having a collection – a ‘Missing Collection’ perhaps, with this year’s options including *Osteospermum* (Cape daisy), *Erysimum* (wallflower), *Ligularia* and *Argyranthemum*, all of which are relatively common in gardens and great for pollinators.

I’m also concerned about a beautiful rose – Munstead Wood – that I’ve had in my garden for many years. Bred by David Austin, it is now described as ‘retired’ from the catalogue. The RHS website says it’s available from four suppliers, so I don’t think it would qualify as a Plant Guardian plant, but could it be a Threatened Plant of the Year? I’ve taken cuttings and am having a go at propagating it. Being part of a collective – and helping the greater good for plants, people, and planet – is also part of the fun.

NEXT MONTH …
Ashley Edwards writes on accessibility to gardens and green spaces – how do we make them welcoming for all?

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WHAT TO DO NOW

50 things to do this month from the *Gardeners' World* team

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88 Fruit & veg
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PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; PAUL DEBOIS; JASON INGRAM

Pot up large exotics

Add drama to your garden with potted exotics. Soak the plant, in its original pot, in some not-too-cold water. Then move the new, empty, pot into position; this saves you doing so when it's full of heavy compost.

Part-fill the pot with an equal-parts mix of John Innes potting and peat-free potting compost. Next slip the pot off the plant and stand it in the centre of the pot. The top should sit just under the rim of the new pot. Fill around the plant and firm it in, before giving it another good soak to settle it in.

Exotics will put on growth quickly in the warmth of summer

30 MINUTES TO SPARE

Hardy geraniums that have collapsed and are making borders messy can be cut back now. You will be rewarded with fresh foliage and possibly more flowers. Cut back stray stems to a few centimetres above ground level. If the ground is dry, water the plant well afterwards.

Push mowers are rewarding to use, but struggle on longer grass

Give a push mower a try

Keep mowing the lawn, and if you're sick of the noise and weight of your powered mower, try a push mower. These machines are very light, but they need strength to push, and work best on small, flat areas of lawn. It's also important to use them very regularly, so the grass is not too long.

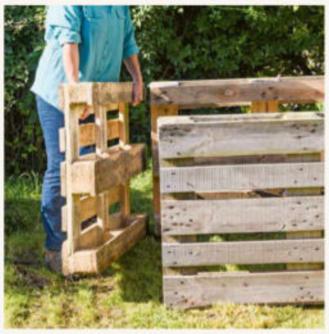
Keep the blades sharp and you'll enjoy the exercise, and the gentle sound of the blades rotating will please everyone around you.

It's the perfect carbon-neutral way to manage your lawn. If it doesn't have a grass box, rake up the trimmings and mix them into the compost heap.

STEP BY STEP

Start a new compost heap

Enjoy a homemade fertility boost by building your own compost heap. Green waste from the kitchen must be uncooked. Big heaps are most efficient but a small bin will work, as long as you add plenty of brown waste such as shredded cardboard to aerate it.



1 BUILD a decent-sized compost heap with pallets wired or tied together. Make the front easy to take off so you can add or turn material easily.

2 ADD both green waste to heat the heap and carbon-rich brown material that keeps the rotting process fuelled. A mix of different-sized pieces is ideal.

3 TURN the heap every few weeks for quicker results. The heat is in the middle so the outer material needs to be turned inwards to rot down properly.

Weeds will take off in summer's warmth if not restricted now

Clear invasive pond plants

It's time to pull out or trim vigorous plants that are clogging up your pond. Many submerged aquatic plants such as elodea, hornwort and starwort grow fast and are important oxygenators, but need to be thinned. Pull pieces gently from the base and lift them out of the water so you don't disturb the roots of other plants.

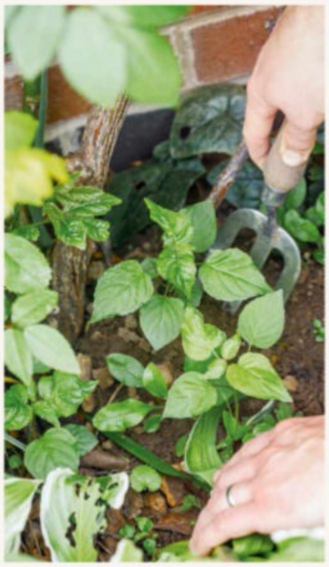
Floating weeds such as blanket weed can be scooped out, and water lily leaves trimmed back if they are covering more than half the surface. Chop up the trimmings and put them on the compost heap.

Control enchanter's nightshade

Keep enchanter's nightshade under control before it swamps the shady areas of your garden. It's very pretty when the spikes of tiny white flowers come out, and and it's a food source for many pollinators, but the seeds spread far and wide in the garden.

Deadhead flowers to stop it setting seed. Pulling the plant out often leaves roots, but lifting them will eventually work.

Keeping the plants but carefully controlling the population with a combination of deadheading and pulling works well.



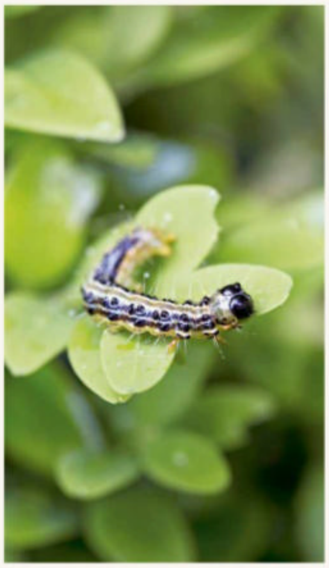
Digging out with a hand trowel should be sufficient if repeated

Look out for box moth caterpillar

Check for box moth caterpillar on box plants and remove it before it decimates topiary and hedges. The first signs you notice may be browning leaves.

Look right into the plant for the webbing the caterpillars create for protection. Birds will feed on some, as will spiders and some wasps. Small infestations spotted straight away can be controlled with hand picking. Pheromone traps are an effective way to catch adults and interrupt the breeding cycle.

If your hedge is ruined, consider an alternative hedging plant such as yew, small-leaved holly, euonymus or *Lonicera nitida*.



You will notice the distinctive webbing before the caterpillars

DON'T FORGET

- ☐ **Water recently sown or turfed lawns to help them establish, before it gets hot**
- ☐ **Prune *Clematis montana* if it's too big, cutting some this year and saving some for next year**
- ☐ **Protect vulnerable plants from slugs and snails**
- ☐ **Pot up seeded plants to grow on and bulk up for a few weeks in a sheltered spot**

WORDS: ROSIE YEOMANS. PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; NEIL HEPWORTH; JASON INGRAM

A dipping trough makes filling watering cans easier and far quicker

Fill cans from water butts

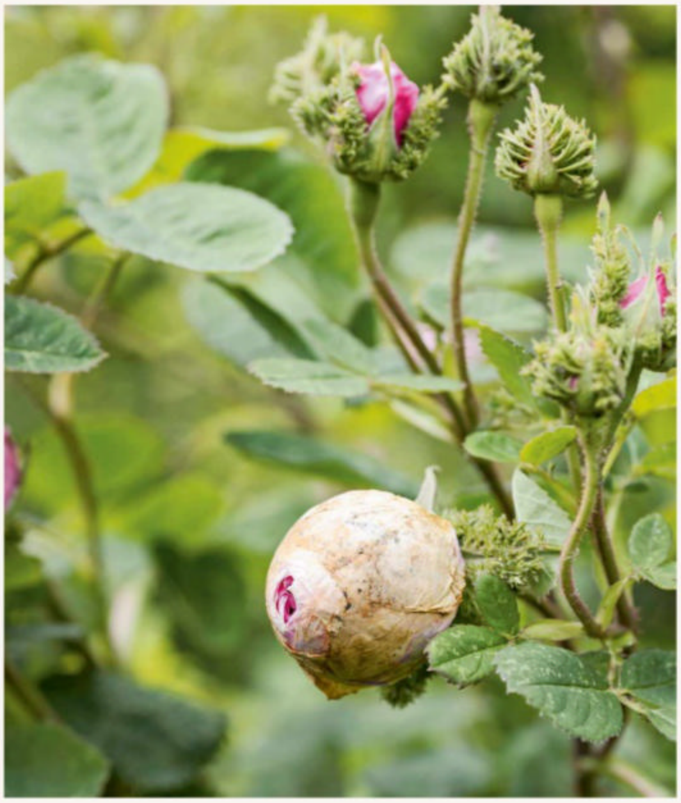
Get ready for higher temperatures by filling watering cans from water butts and dipping troughs. Place full cans around the garden or in the greenhouse so they're ready for use and the water has a chance to warm up in the sun. Warm water is much better for plants at this time of year because it avoids cold-water stress at the roots.

Dipping troughs make the job of filling the can faster than waiting for a tap. If rain is forecast, fill as many cans and buckets as possible to make space for extra rainwater collection.

Look out for rose balling

Keep an eye out for unopened double flowers on roses. In cool, wet weather they can remain unopened. Then, when the sun comes out, the outer petals dry and encase the moist inner petals, causing them to rot inside. Deadhead them as soon as you notice this to avoid grey mould setting in. It's not a disaster, though: more flowers will open.

To prevent balling in future, prune roses with complicated petal arrangements to make sure there is plenty of airflow around the plant. Give these roses plenty of space and avoid planting near overhanging trees.



Rose balling may be a problem if June weather is colder than usual

Beechgrove

Beechgrove Garden

BEECHGROVE'S BACK
The new series is back on BBC Scotland and BBC TWO. Check TV listings for details.

BBC TWO

Mix some compost into the planting hole to give plants a boost

VIEW FROM BEECHGROVE

Plant out dahlias

With May safely behind us, and the risk of a late frost now minimal here at Beechgrove, our half-hardy plants, including dahlias, can finally be planted out. These were started off in March, in pots suited to their tuber size, in a frost-free greenhouse. Fully hardened off, they were well watered prior to planting in sunny sites, with supports. A nutrient-rich growing medium will nourish and sustain these hungry plants. Beechgrove's own garden compost is added to the soil and potting mix, and any additional feeding is in the form of a high-potash liquid feed to promote flowering.

DON'T FORGET

- ☐ Plant out leeks by creating a shallow trench with a trowel, or equally spaced holes with a dibber, and water well
- ☐ Direct sow remaining annual seed mixes no later than the middle of the month
- ☐ Sow wallflowers, forget-me-nots and pansies in spare beds for transplanting late in the season
- ☐ Check for gooseberry sawfly caterpillars. Shake stems to see if any fall off the plant

WORDS: ROSIE YEOMANS. PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; JASON INGRAM; TIM SANDALL

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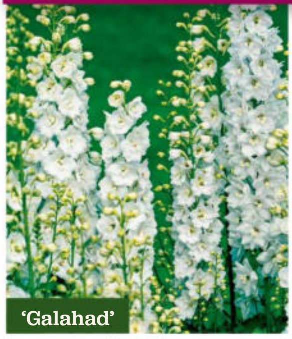
'Galahad'

'Magic Fountains Sky Blue White Bee'

'Blue Jay'

'Magic Fountains Cherry Blossom'

Summer Skies Group

'Magic Fountains Pure White'

'Magic Fountains Lavender White Bee'

Guinevere Group

Blue Bird Group

'Magic Fountains Dark Blue White Bee'

'Blue Butterfly'

Black Knight Group

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The collection comprises these 12 delphinium varieties:

- 'Galahad'
- 'Magic Fountains Sky Blue White Bee'
- 'Blue Jay'
- 'Magic Fountains Cherry Blossom'
- Summer Skies Group
- 'Magic Fountains Pure White'
- 'Magic Fountains Lavender White Bee'
- Guinevere Group
- Blue Bird Group
- 'Magic Fountains Dark Blue White Bee'
- 'Blue Butterfly'
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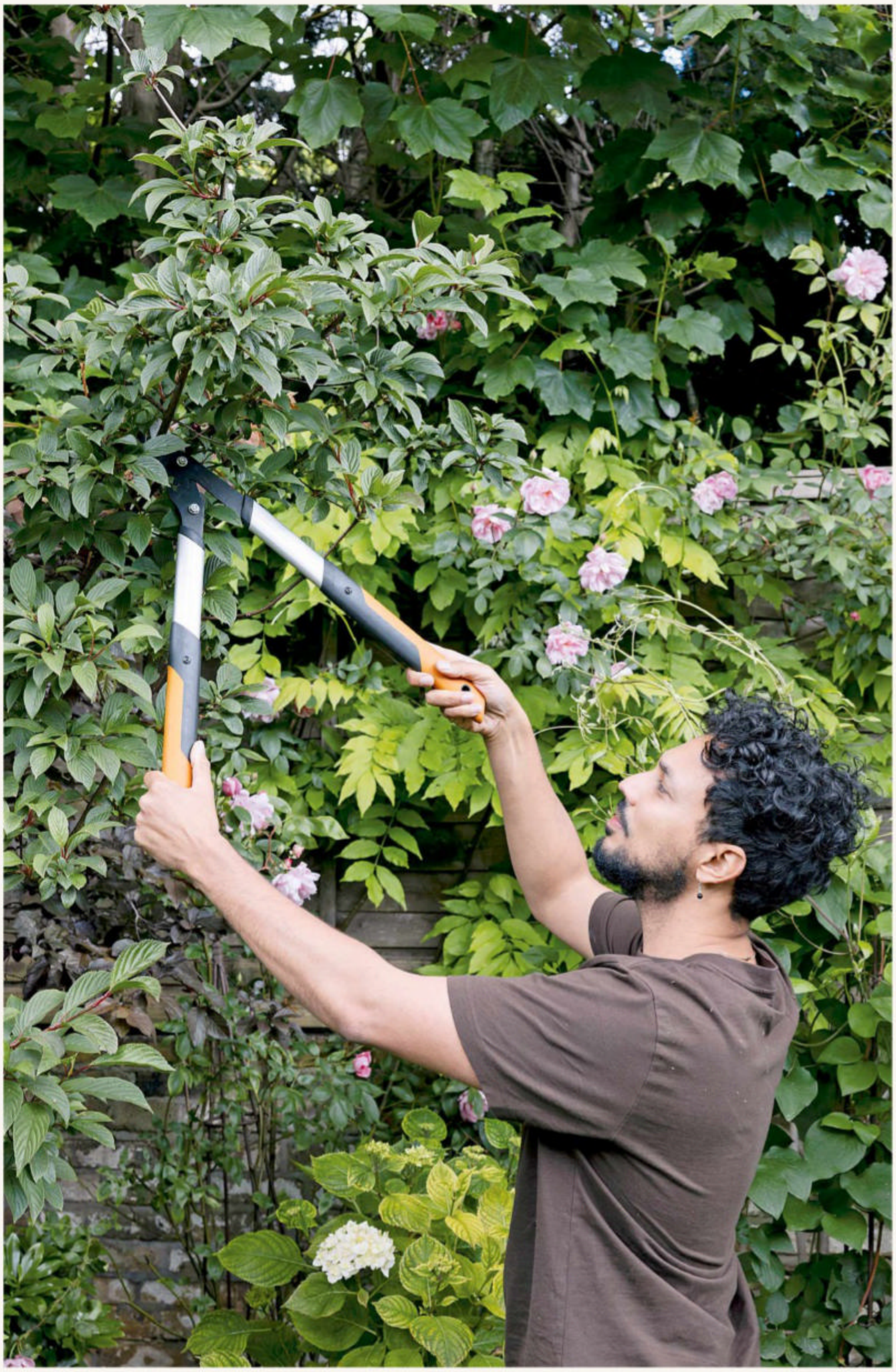
***Ashley Edwards** shows you what to prune in the garden this month*



Remove any weak or crossing stems on viburnums in early summer, after flowering is over

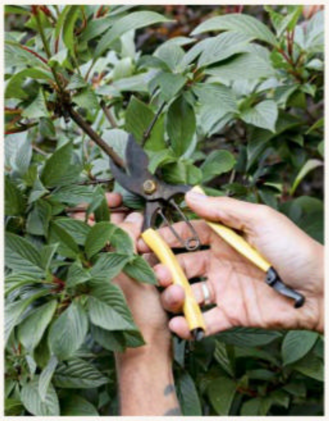
Shape up your viburnum

Viburnums have deliciously scented flowers in spring, which add a pop of colour when many other plants are still slowly waking up. You'll often see them in winter gardens and they take centre stage when planted with a backdrop of evergreens.

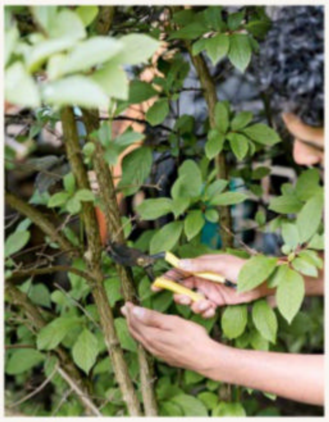
Prune deciduous viburnum from May after frost has passed in your area. The aim is to improve the shape of the plant and rejuvenate it to encourage good flowering. Also remove dead, diseased or crossing branches, along with any spindly growth. By pruning soon after flowering, you allow the plant time to put on strong growth for flowering the following year.

STEP BY STEP

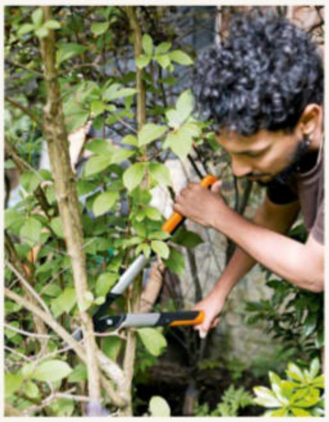
Prune viburnum



1 USE a sharp, clean pair of secateurs to remove any spindly stems back to a main branch or to ground level. This will help to produce strong flowering stems next year.



2 USING your secateurs, shape the plant. The shrub should be evenly rounded to allow light to all stems. Reduce the height of mature plants by 20 per cent so the flowers are visible.



3 OVER time, stems become woody and flowering is reduced. To rejuvenate the plant, remove around 20 per cent of the oldest stems down to the ground, using loppers, each year.

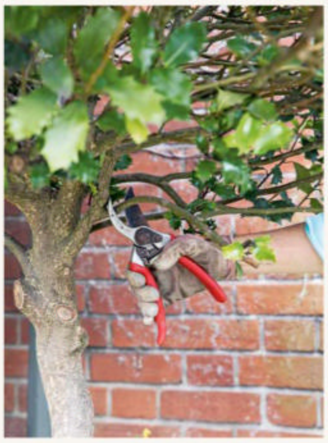
WORDS: ASHLEY EDWARDS. PHOTOS: PAUL DEBOIS

Trim lilacs lightly after flowering to reshape the plant, unless it is is old and overgrown

Prune lilacs after flowering

It's important to prune syringa (lilacs) immediately after the flowers have faded, as the plant will soon start to form buds for next year's display. Syringa benefits from a light pruning, and you can also take out any suckers that can appear from the base of the plant, cutting them down to the ground.

Remove any branches that are rubbing and damaged, and aim to create an open structure in the centre of the shrub. To rejuvenate a very old shrub, you can remove 20 per cent of the oldest branches each year. Remember to mulch well with an organic, peat-free garden compost after pruning.



Reshape topiary plants such as holly and bay in early summer

Shape evergreen topiary plants

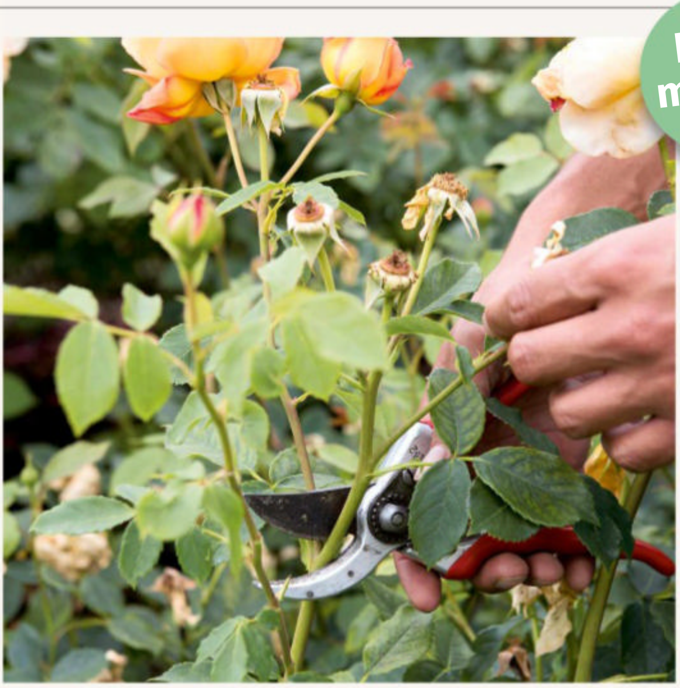
Topiary is perfect for adding formality to a garden and is useful when creating a focal point. To maintain their shape, topiary plants need to be regularly pruned. Using secateurs, trim your plant into the desired shape. Remove growth little and often.

If you have a large specimen, such as a cloud-pruned tree, a pair of sharp shears will make fast work of it, while battery-powered shears will also save straining your wrists. Remove lower branches with a pruning saw so that the trunk of the plant is clear. You may find that the topiary tries to revert to a multi-stemmed plant, so make sure to remove suckers from the base.

Tidy up roses

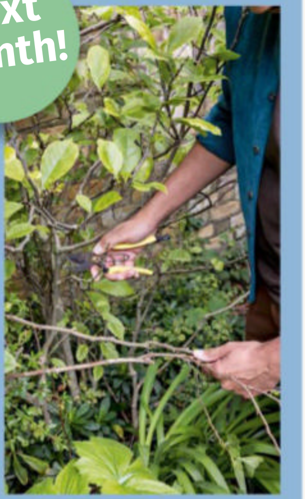
Deadhead repeat-flowering roses frequently to ensure that they continue to produce buds throughout the summer months. Using secateurs, cut the spent flowers down to the next set of leaves. This will avoid leaving behind stems that die back, and can act as entry points for disease and fungus.

Trimming little and often throughout the flowering season also helps to keep the rose in a balanced shape and prevents it becoming congested. Black spot and powdery mildew thrive in plants that are overcrowded, another great reason to keep on top of your pruning. Check for any die-back that may have occurred and remove this, too.



Cut your rose stems back to a leaf joint when deadheading

Next month!



☐ **Ashley shows how to keep magnolias healthy and full of flowers by pruning them regularly**

PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; PAUL DEBOIS

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WIN! A premium griddle BBQ bundle from Weber

Enter now for a chance to win a fantastic BBQ bundle, including a premium gas griddle, utensils and a basting dome

With summer just around the corner, now's the perfect time to think about outdoor cooking end entertaining. *BBC Gardeners' World Magazine* has partnered with top BBQ manufacturer Weber to offer two lucky readers the chance to win a fantastic BBQ bundle. The star is Weber's SLATE 76cm premium griddle. This versatile barbeque enables you to cook anything from simple breakfasts to fancy dinners.

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- Closing date is **Monday 7 July at 23:59pm**. Two winners will be notified and the prize arranged for delivery after this date.
- Please read our competition rules online before you enter.
- Please note that this competition is only open to UK residents aged 18 years or over.

Terms and conditions Full competition rules available on the website. Entrants should enter via the online entry form. Entries received after the closing date of the promotion will not be considered. The winners must claim their prize within 3 months of the closing date. If the prize offered is unavailable, a substitute of equal value will be provided. No cash alternative is available. Entry to this competition shall be deemed full and unconditional acceptance of the terms and conditions.

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Select non-flowering shoots and take 8cm-long cuttings, from just below a leaf joint

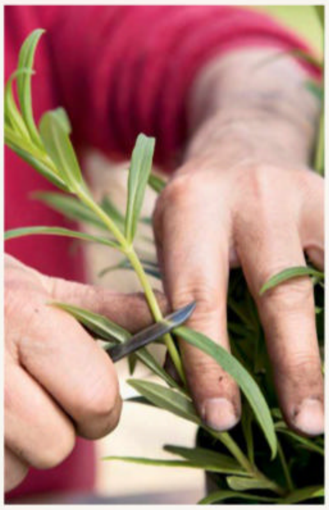
Make more penstemons

Now is a good time to take cuttings of healthy, soft, new growth on penstemons. These sun-loving perennials are valuable plants for providing rich colour to borders in summer and can be relied on to keep the flowers coming well into autumn.

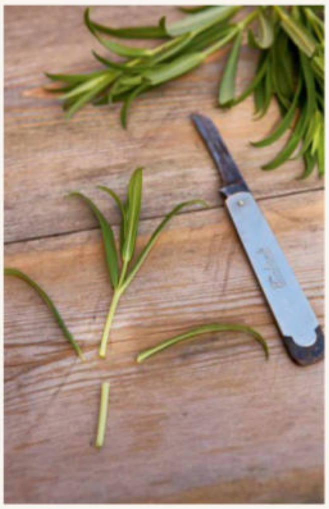
Penstemons are best grown in a warm, free-draining, sheltered spot – a sandy soil is ideal. Some aren't hardy, but varieties with thin leaves are the toughest. Thick-leaved varieties may not survive winter, especially in clay soils and northern gardens. Taking cuttings and growing them on in pots through summer will give you fresh plants that can be kept in a greenhouse or cold frame through winter as a backup, then planted out next spring.

Cuttings of soft growth can root quickly, in as little as three weeks, and cuttings will be ready to transplant into individual pots once their roots show through the bottom of the pot. Take cuttings first thing in the morning, when they will be full of water.

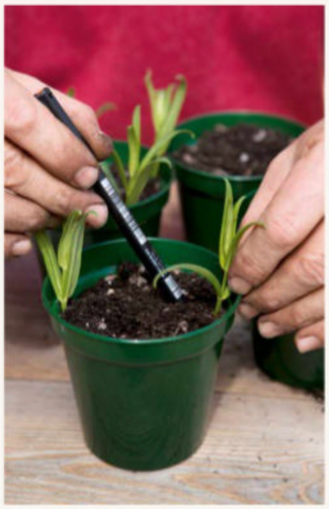
STEP BY STEP Taking penstemon cuttings



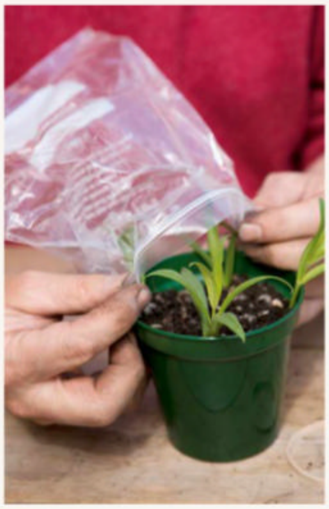
1 SELECT soft, healthy stems of this year's growth and remove them from the plant using a sharp, clean cuttings knife. Woody stems are too old to use.



2 TRIM the cutting by making a slanted cut below a leaf joint at the bottom and remove the lowest pair of leaves so you have around 5cm of clear stem.



3 FILL 10cm pots with gritty cuttings compost. Make holes at the edge of the pot and drop in the cuttings to just below the lowest leaves. Firm in and water.



4 COVER the pot with a clear plastic bag secured with an elastic band, or pop in a propagator. Keep in a well-lit place. Cuttings should root within a few weeks.

PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE

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AWARD-WINNER DESIGNING OUR RHS CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW GARDEN

This year, Henchman has moved their RHS Chelsea Flower Show stand to Pavillion Way, now stand number 234, to be able to create a beautiful garden scene to showcase their award-winning, BSI EN131-certified Tripod Ladders.

Professional garden designer and winner in the Professional Gardener Category of the 2024 Henchman Topiary Awards, Harrie Carnochan, has been Henchman's chosen designer to help create a beautiful, realistic garden with uneven terrain, tall hedging and an array of colourful bedding plants, perfect for showcasing why you need a Henchman Tripod Ladder when working at height in the garden.

Come and try the only BSI EN131 fully certified Tripod Ladder at RHS Chelsea Flower Show on stand 234.

THE HENCHMAN TOPIARY AWARDS ARE BACK!

After the resounding success of the inaugural Henchman Topiary Awards in 2024, the highly popular competition is back this year and even expanding into Europe! With two awards for both UK and Europe, entrants can enter for the Best Professional Topiary Award or the Best Home Garden Creation Award.

This year, there is an exciting panel of judges including the return of professional topiarist Andy Bourke, better known online as The Hedge Barber, and Michael Buck, Head of Horticulture at Creepers Nursery. New to the panel are Petra Hoyer Millar, editor of The Dirt Horticulture News and finalist in last year's awards and Patrick Salembier, President of EBTS France.

This esteemed panel will be blind judging the applications in

Harrie Carnochan's winning Topiary Garden for the 2024 Professional Category.

Judges Owen (left) and Elizabeth (middle right) with winners Harrie (right) and David (middle left).

June after the final submission date of 31st May 2025, ready for the winners to be announced at this year's RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival.

David Hawson's wonderfully whimsical winning hedge in the 2024 Home Garden Category.

UK winners will be invited to attend the announcement at Hampton Court Palace and receiving a trophy and a high-value bundle of Henchman products.

If you would like to enter this year's Henchman Topiary Awards, please see all the details as well as Terms and Conditions at www.henchman.co.uk/pages/henchman-topiary-awards

✤ For more information or to order, call **03333 444 229** or visit **www.henchman.co.uk**

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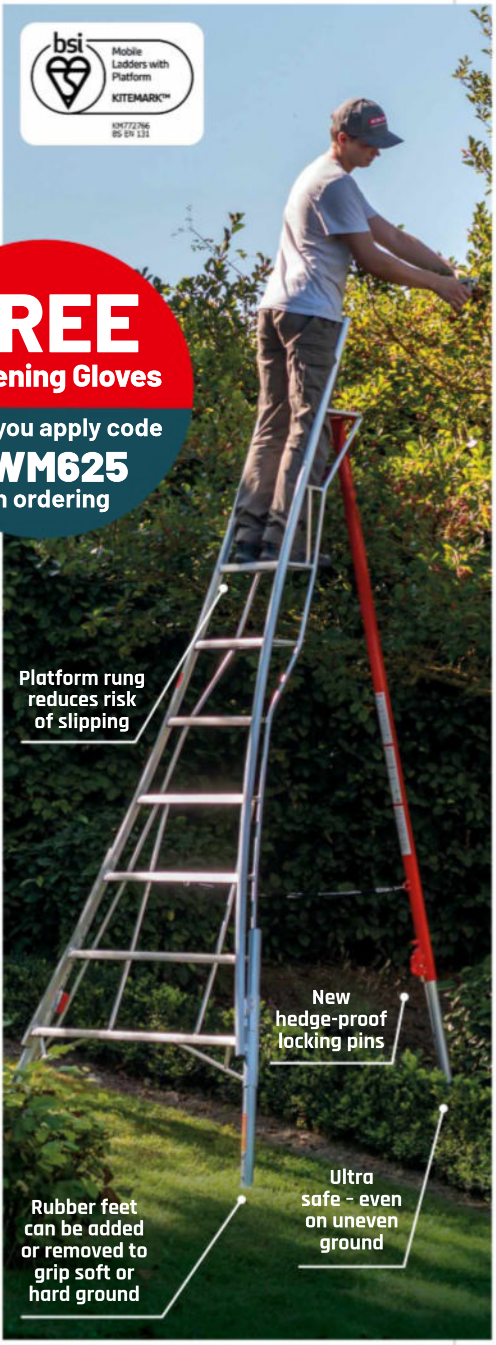
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Sow your FREE seeds

This month, subscribers receive FREE chard Bright Lights and ox-eye daisy seeds. This colourful chard looks great on the plate and on the allotment, and is packed with goodness. It crops over a long period, from midsummer until the end of autumn. Ox-eye daisies are a must if you are looking for a cheerful perennial. It has masses of blooms from June to August and is good for a wildlife-friendly garden, attracting bees, butterflies and hoverflies. Grow it in full sun or part shade, and stake it in exposed areas.

3 reasons to grow chard Bright Lights

- It's easy to grow and will crop all summer
- Baby leaves look attractive in salads
- Chard is a good source of vitamin C

Sowalong together

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Listen to our Sowalong podcasts, where **Adam Frost**, **Matt Biggs** and the *Gardeners' World* team share tips and tricks for growing all your free seeds, and many more of your favourite flowers, veg and herbs. Find new bite-sized Sowalong episodes every Saturday until the end of June to help you get great results growing from seed. Search for the *BBC Gardeners' World Magazine* podcast on Spotify or Apple Podcasts, or go to ***GardenersWorld.com/podcast***

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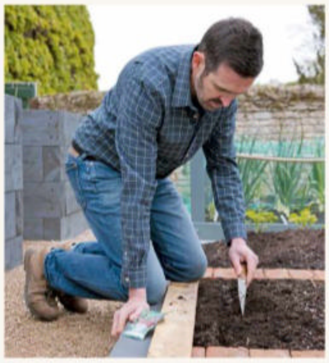
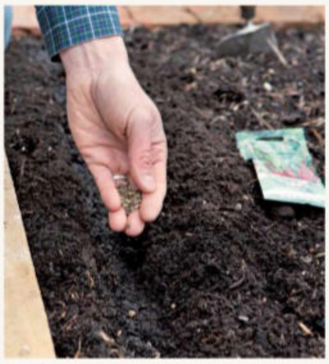
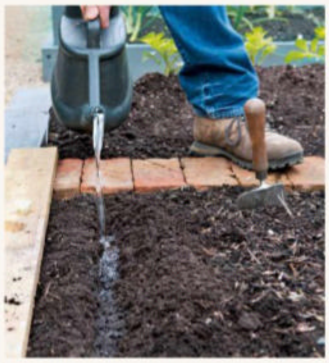
STEP BY STEP Sowing chard Bright Lights from seed



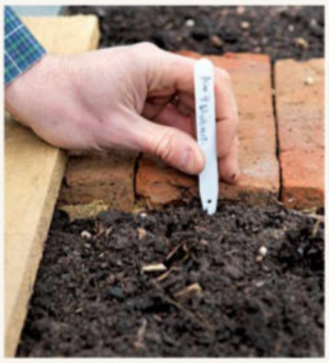
1 CHOOSE a sunny or semi-shaded, weed-free spot to grow your crop and make a row 2cm-deep using a trowel.



2 SPRINKLE the seed as thinly and evenly as you can along the row – later you will need to thin out the seedlings to 20cm apart.



3 COVER the seed with 2cm of raked soil or compost, then water gently along the row, and again if very dry.



4 PUSH a label in at the end of the row so you remember not to disturb the area while you wait for the seeds to germinate.

PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; JASON INGRAM

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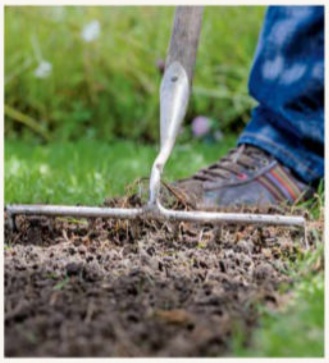
mr-fothergills.co.uk

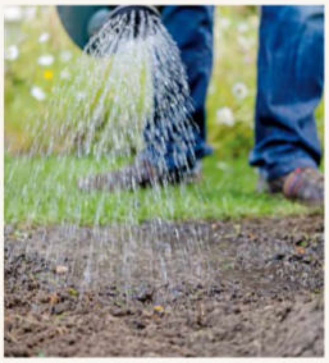
Gardeners' World
Ox-eye daisy
Gardeners' World
Chard
Bright Lights

3 reasons to grow ox-eye daisy

- Ox-eye daisy is a hardy perennial, and flowers year after year
- Its blooms make great cut flowers
- Good for adding flowers to wild areas

STEP BY STEP Sowing ox-eye daisies from seed


1 WEED and rake an area of soil in a sunny site, removing as many stones as you can and leaving the area level.


2 USING a watering can with a rose attachment, water the soil well so it's damp before sowing. This will aid germination.

3 SPRINKLE the seed over the soil and cover with a 5mm layer of sieved compost. Seeds will take 2-6 weeks to germinate.

4 THIN seedlings to 5cm apart, then in autumn plant them in a sunny border or wildflower meadow to flower next summer.

*DUE TO EXPORT RESTRICTIONS, SEEDS ARE ONLY AVAILABLE TO UK SUBSCRIBERS

PORTELET, GUERNSEY
Tribe Time
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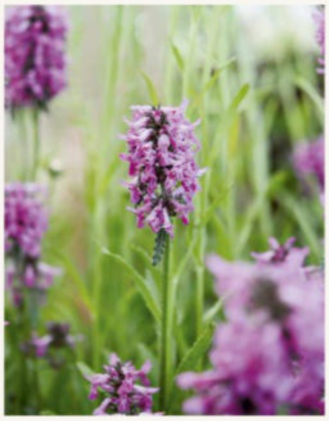
***Kate Bradbury**'s top tasks to do this month to make your garden more wildlife-friendly*

Start a new log pile

Make a log pile that all sorts of wildlife can use, including invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and hedgehogs. Birds may peck through it looking for food, too.

Simply pile up logs and branches of all sizes, starting with the larger logs at the bottom, and finishing with smaller branches, twigs and herbaceous material at the top. Avoid disturbing it, so that wildlife can live there undisturbed.

Site your log pile beside some flowering plants, so your bee inhabitants have nectar nearby



Betony provides late-season nectar and pollen for pollinators

Grow more native plants

Add native plants to your garden to benefit a wide range of wildlife. These plants have evolved alongside our wildlife for the last 12,000 years, which means they support more species of fauna than non-natives – especially butterflies and moths.

Make space for cuckoo flower, foxgloves, common harebell, betony, hemp agrimony and viper's bugloss, and don't remove 'weeds' such as dandelions, docks, chickweed and nettles, as they all provide essential food and shelter.

DON'T FORGET

- ☐ Take part in the Let it Bloom June campaign
- ☐ Keep nectar flowing for pollinators, such as bees, by watering flowers in dry weather
- ☐ Let aphids remain on plants, including roses, so sparrows can use them to feed their chicks
- ☐ Check nettles before strimming in case they're harbouring small tortoiseshell or peacock caterpillars
- ☐ Conduct a flower audit to see how many bee-friendly flowers are in your garden and assess if there is room for improvement

30 MINUTES TO SPARE

Install a wildlife camera to discreetly capture the goings on in your garden. There are many types available, but footage is of a similar quality. Fix a bracket to your fence or a wooden post to get a good view. Position it near a feeding station to spy on hedgehogs or in front of a pond to record frogs. Foxes will make it clear it's all about them, though.

Slow-worms are likely to be found in shaded and humid conditions

Make a slow-worm refugia

Create a warm and cosy haven for slow-worms by laying a piece of corrugated iron or bitumen-coated roofing sheet over a patch of dry straw or grass clippings in a sunny spot. Slow-worms are cold blooded, so need to warm up in the morning before searching for food or a mate. Some reptiles, like lizards and adders, bask in the sun out in the open, but slow-worms prefer being under cover.

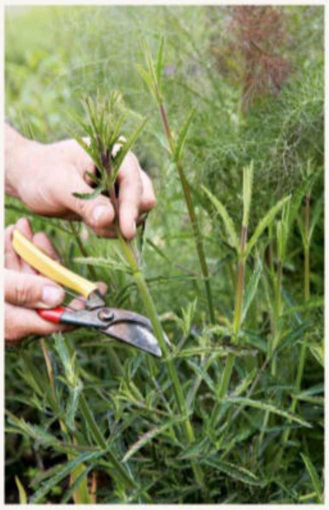
PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; GETTY/ALASDAIRJAMES; JASON INGRAM

Deadhead as low as you can on each flower stem so that regrowth is neat

Deadhead plants in hanging baskets

Start deadheading the flowers in hanging baskets as soon as they fade. Snip them off at the base of the flower stem. This keeps them producing more flowers right through the summer, providing you remember to do it every week.

You can also cut back the weak and untidy stems to encourage more compact growth that will better support many more flowers. Take off any yellowing leaves and look right into the plant where less light gets to the crowded stems, and take out any leaf debris.



Cut just above a leaf join to avoid leaving unsightly snags

Trim back stems on verbena

Cut back the long stems of tall verbena to thicken the growth and create more sideshoots, which will result in more flowers. Target just the longest stems to make the plants more uniform and in proportion with surrounding plants in the border.

The stems are soft so cutting them is easy. Reach down below flower-stem level to take out any stems that look untidy or are flopping into other plants. This will also encourage more flowers later this summer. Chop up the prunings and add them to the compost heap.

QUICK SOLUTIONS

Make sure your flowers are shown off perfectly by neatening border edges. If you have a lawn edge, make it crisp and straight with a half-moon tool and cut it short with shears. Pull up any weeds that were hidden beneath over-hanging grass.

Suckers' leaves usually look different to the rest of the rose

Remove suckers from roses

Take off the suckers growing up from the roots of roses. Suckers are stems appearing directly from the roots. If the plant is grafted, as roses usually are, the suckers will look quite different and will often be more vigorous than the main plant.

It's best to scrape the soil back and give the fresh young shoot a sharp pull to the side to tear off the root. It's easiest when it's young. Pruning it back can make it look immediately better but does encourage vigorous regrowth.

Make sure the seed is in good contact with the compost

Sow hollyhocks

Start some hollyhock seeds now to grow strong young plants for flowering next year. The seeds are large and can be sown singly into cell trays. Fill a tray with multi-purpose compost, tap it to settle the compost then put a seed into the centre of each cell.

Cover with a 5mm layer of compost, label the tray, then soak the tray with water. Put the tray on the greenhouse bench or in a protected spot, where they'll germinate in about a fortnight. Keep the seedlings well watered.

Wigwams are perfect for later-blooming clematis, which will cover them in flowers from midsummer

Tie in loose clematis stems

Train clematis stems onto their supports to maximise flowering and to stop stems growing into a tangle over neighbouring plants. Summer and late-summer flowering clematis are vigorous and stems growing into each other on the support are fine, and look very natural.

Encourage this but tie them in, bearing in mind that the more light they're exposed to at the top, the better they'll flower. Use soft string and tie them loosely because stems snap easily. They'll grow into each other using their natural support method of twisting leaf stems around whatever they meet.

Clear away papery old flowerheads to let in more light and air

Deadhead rhododendrons

Deadhead the papery flowerheads of rhododendrons to stop them setting seed. This encourages the plant to divert energy into healthy growth for flowering next year. Just snip off the flowers to make the plant look tidy.

If the bush is getting too big, some careful pruning can be done if the weather is not too hot. Wayward stems can be pruned back into the canopy. Select a few more to trim where there are holes, so the regrowth will fill the gaps and flower next year.

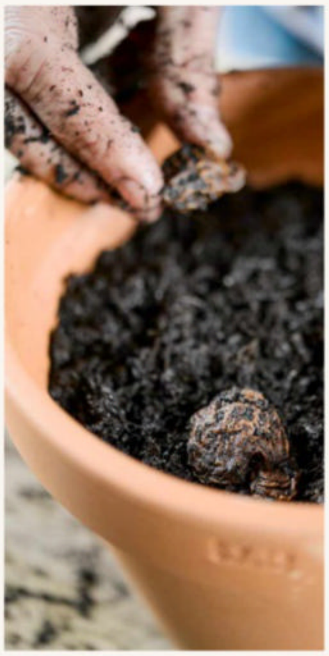
DON'T FORGET

- ☐ **Cut back spring-flowering perennials such as pulmonaria, to encourage fresh new foliage**
- ☐ **Pinch out the tips of fuchsias and bedding plants to encourage bushier growth**
- ☐ **Prune late-spring or early-summer shrubs after flowering**
- ☐ **Fill any gaps in borders with pots of tall bulbs, such as fragrant lilies, to add instant colour**

Plant anemones

Get some *Anemone coronaria* corms planted now, for flowers later this summer. First soak the corms in water until they look plump. This may take several hours. Fill a 20-30cm pot nearly up to the top with peat-free compost.

Place the corms pointed-side-up, or if they're flat put them on their sides 8cm apart. Cover with a 3cm layer of compost and lightly firm with your hand. Grown in pots, they make a beautiful feature in shade or sun. They can also be cut and put in a vase.



Soaking corms before planting will help to get plants growing

WORDS: ROSIE YEOMANS. PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; JASON INGRAM; TIM SANDALL

Feed plants for the best results

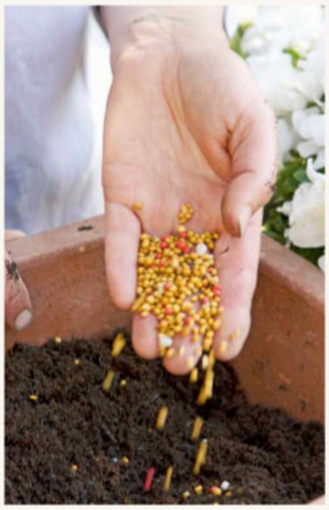
Give plants a boost this month so they will put on their best show. There are a lot of plants that will benefit from a feed – this is especially true for those plants that you're relying on to produce a heavy crop or provide plenty of colour in the garden.

Feeding is an easy thing to forget to do, but the results are well worth the time that it takes to do it. Not all plants benefit from being fed in the same way though, and tailoring your feeding to suit different plants will give the best result and also prevent plants from putting on too much leafy growth at the expense of flowers and fruits.

You can also choose plant food based on how you like to garden, including long-term plant foods, which work well if you are short on time, and liquid food you can add when watering plants. You can also make your own plant food from comfrey to save money and give your garden an eco-friendly boost.

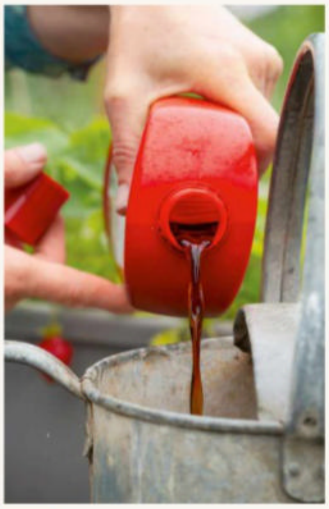
Use a high-potash tomato feed to encourage fruit rather than excess foliage

4 WAYS TO apply your plant food



1 ADD controlled-release plant food to the compost for planting new pots. This type of food releases nutrients throughout the growing season, so you don't have to remember to feed regularly.

2 SPRINKLE granular rose food around the base of your rose bushes this month, ideally just before rain. These feeds contain the right balance of nutrients to promote a second flush of flowers.



3 DILUTE liquid tomato feed in a watering can and apply to damp compost. This will give a bumper crop if given to heavy-cropping plants in containers, such as tomatoes and peppers.

4 MAKE comfrey feed in a watertight container. Add around 15 litres of water to 1kg of chopped comfrey. Leave it to steep for four weeks. Dilute at a ratio of 1:10 and use it on fruiting crops.

PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; NEIL HEPWORTH; JASON INGRAM

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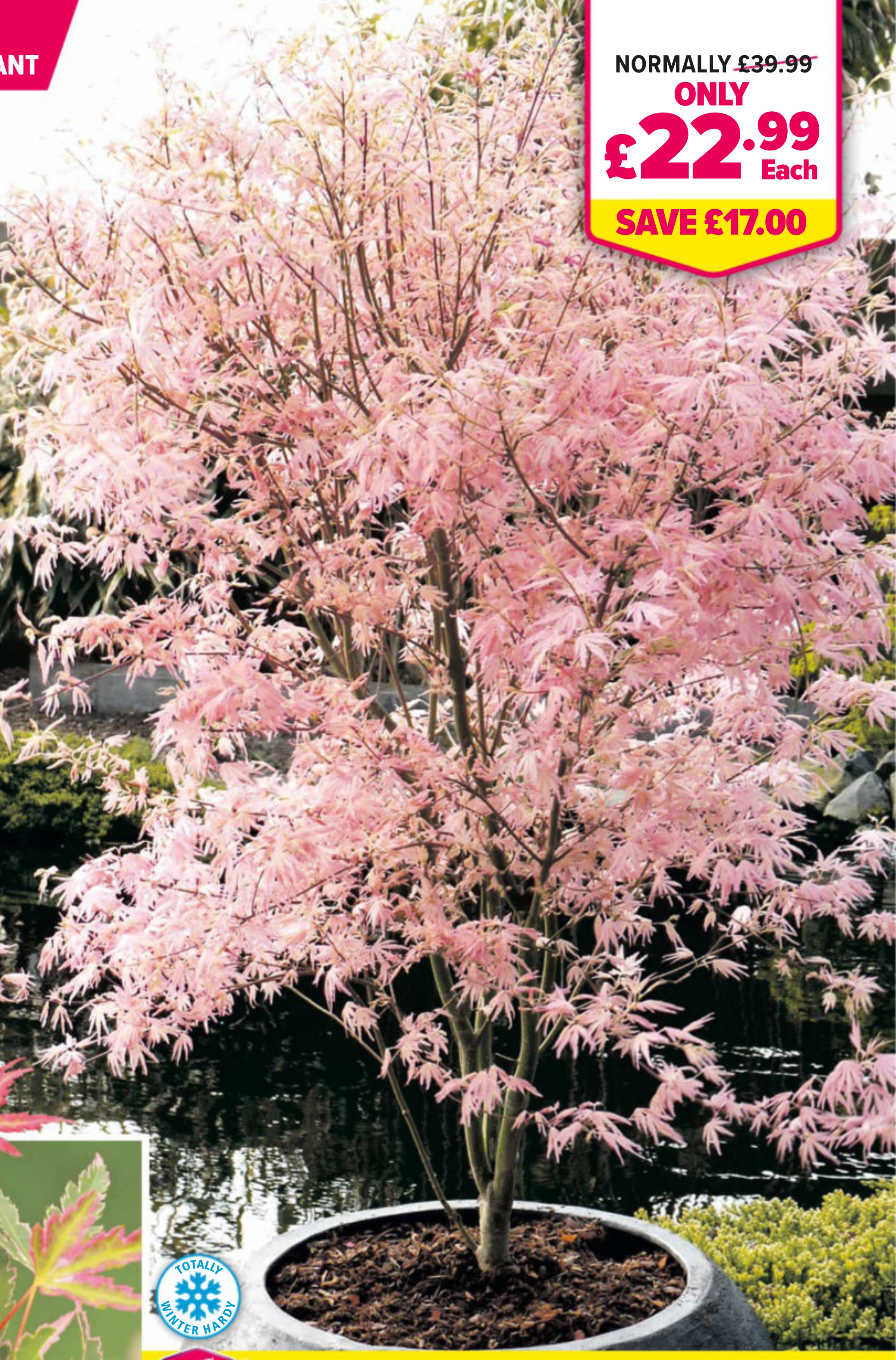

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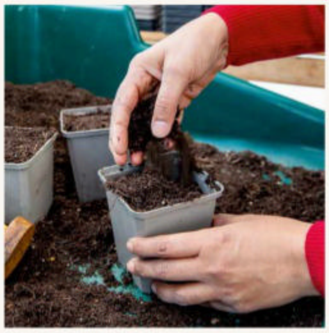
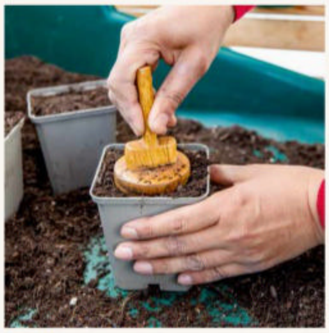
STEP BY STEP

Sow late tender crops

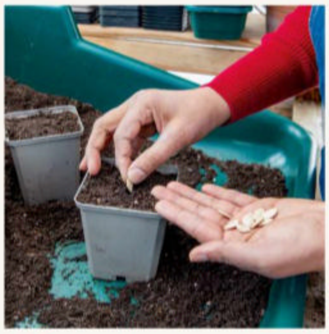
Sow tender crops now while plants have time to grow and crop later. Early-sown French beans and courgettes can run out of steam, so having fresh plants will extend the cropping period. They will germinate fast and grow well with the long days and high light levels.



1 FILL deep, 9cm diameter pots with peat-free multi-purpose compost. Sow one seed per pot to give the plant plenty of room to develop strong roots.



2 TAP the pot on the bench to level the compost, then tamp it down gently, so that the surface is 1cm below the rim to allow for watering and seed cover.



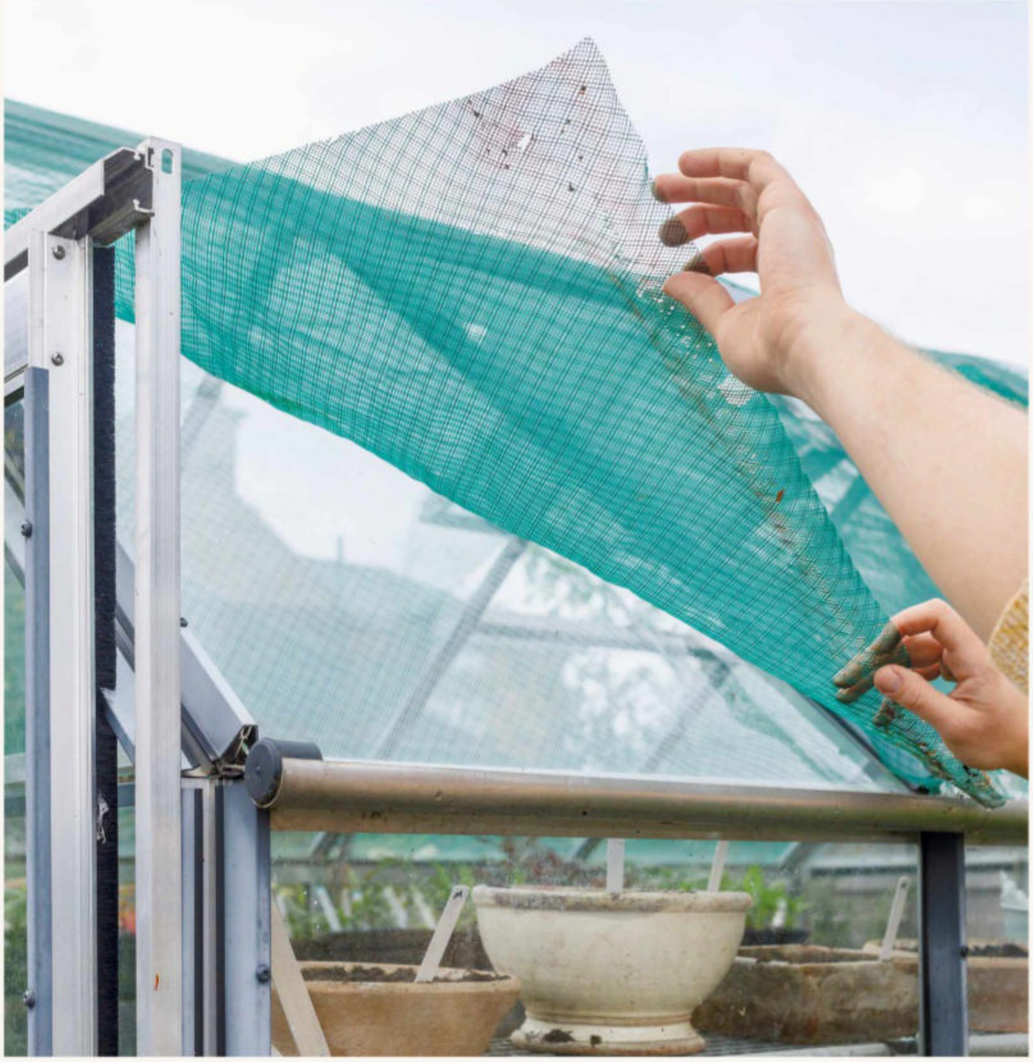
3 PRESS seeds such as squash, cucumbers and sweetcorn into the compost and cover so they are 1.5cm deep, 2cm for beans. Soak with warm water.

PHOTOS: PAUL DEBOIS; NEIL HEPWORTH; TIM SANDALL

Put up greenhouse shading

Install shading to reduce the radiant heat that causes temperature extremes in summer. This will help crops such as tomatoes to ripen. It will also help to avoid leaf scorch from splashes on the leaves.

Shading material can be attached with clips to the glass panel frames, either inside or outside the house. Make sure the material is pulled taut and that the vents can still be opened easily. You can also use greenhouse window paint, but this will need to be washed off at the end of the summer.



Shading a greenhouse can be as simple as draping a large piece of hessian or plastic weave on the roof

Tie in cucumbers

Train cucumber stems to supports as they rapidly get into growth. Tie them onto canes or use netting supports to grow them vertically so they take up minimal space in the greenhouse. Use soft string to tie the stems to the supports.

Allow enough room in the tie for the stem to thicken but don't make them so loose that the stem is pulled down once the heavy fruits are developing. Cucumbers can be allowed to sprawl if you have the space, otherwise, pinch out the tips of side shoots as they appear.

Tie stems loosely to canes with soft twine so they have room to grow

Make sure the container is large enough to accommodate the roots when the plants are fully grown

Move tender veg to final pots

Pot up young plants of aubergines, peppers and tomatoes into their final containers. Select a large pot and fill with nutrient-rich potting compost, mixing in a few scoops of rotted manure to give the plants a boost.

Soak the plants before potting. Hold them in the centre of the pot, so they are a little deeper than they were in their previous pot, while you press compost around the roots. Firm them in gently and add a supporting cane. Water again and put in a sunny spot.

DON'T FORGET

- ☐ Sow biennials, such as foxgloves, honesty, wallflowers and sweet rocket, in trays
- ☐ Introduce biological controls to the greenhouse if you have pests such as whitefly or red spider mite
- ☐ Feed flowering and fruiting plants weekly with tomato feed
- ☐ Treat pots with vine weevil control if this pest has been a problem in the past, as larvae will become active this month

Keep windows open during the day to avoid problems caused by heat

Ventilate the greenhouse daily

Open and shut the vents to regulate the temperature, increase air flow to reduce fungal rots and allow pollinating insects to visit the flowers of fruiting crops. When day temperatures are expected to be high, open doors and roof vents as well as side windows to create air movement. Shut the vents at night if there are dramatic drops in temperatures.

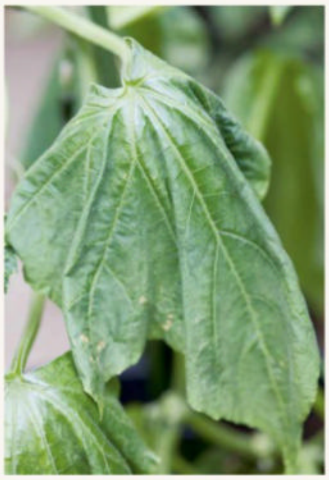
The further north you live, the more likely it is to experience these extremes. Generally through the summer, open vents during the day and close them at night.

STEP BY STEP

Revive dry and wilting plants

Check the greenhouse on hot, sunny days when plants can easily dry out at the roots, and show signs of wilting and scorch. Water daily to keep plants in good condition and help swelling fruits to ripen. Have cans ready filled to make the job easy. Vigorously growing plants will need the most, with less water required once they're flowering or fruiting.

1 WATER plants under glass in the morning so that the humidity is high when it's light and lower at night. Some composts look dry on the top but are still moist around the roots, so check before you water.



2 LOOK for signs of water stress on hot days. The lower leaves wilt first. Water immediately to keep the growing tips hydrated. Damp down the floor at midday to increase humidity.

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Remove the roots of bindweed, as it can grow back from even a small section

Get on top of weeds early

Give your garden plants more chance to flourish by having a purge on weeds competing for space and nutrients. Weeding them out this month dramatically reduces their ability to set seed that can be distributed around the garden, released from exploding capsules, or blown on the wind.

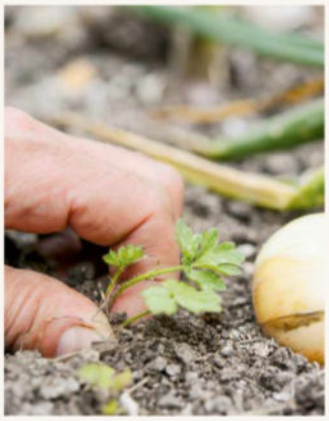
The big wins come from spotting weeds and pulling them out before they are large enough to cause problems. If when you pull, the roots resist, use a trowel or grubber to lever them out of the soil, getting out as much as possible. Weeding is easiest when the ground is damp. In dry spells, hoeing is the best option if there's room to work without damaging surrounding plants.

The tops of weeds can be composted but put the roots into the green waste collection bin, unless your compost heap is hot enough to decompose the toughest material. Weeding will make the garden look tidy but it also aerates the soil surface, removes much of the refuge for slugs and snails and tempts birds to come in and feed on grubs.

4 WAYS TO get rid of weeds

1 CHECK among seedlings for weeds. They may look small but will compete for root room and moisture once they start growing. Grip the base and pull them out.

2 TRACE twining stems of bindweed down to ground level to pull it out, then untangle it from the stems of your plants. Dig out roots if you can get at them.



3 HAND weed around shallow-rooted crops such as onions as a hoe can damage the roots. If weeds are close to the onion, press the soil as you pull the weed out.

4 HOE around crops that are spaced out. Choose a warm day as this will dry out and kill the cut weeds. If it's damp, pick out weeds to stop them rooting back in.

PHOTOS: JASON INGRAM; MARSHA ARNOLD; PAUL DEBOIS; SARAH CUTTLE

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STEP BY STEP Repot a cactus

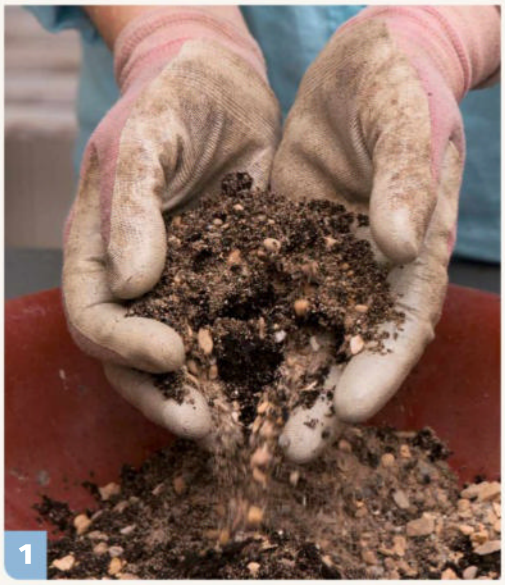
Repot your cactus when the plant has grown out close to the edge of the pot. Cacti need some root room but are heavy and more vulnerable to tip over when they're left in small pots, so make sure the new pot is at least 5cm larger all the way around your plant. Newly potted cacti should be watered in then left to dry before watering again, as the fresh compost can hold water longer until it roots out.

1 USE a proprietary compost designed for cactus plants or mix your own compost by hand using a peat-free John Innes young plant compost that contains at least 50 per cent grit, sharp sand or perlite to make it really free draining.

2 PUT gloves on and use a cloth or paper to further protect your hands while you tip the plant over and remove it from the pot. Wet the compost to release the roots if they're stuck to the inside of the pot.

3 PART fill the pot with compost, then keep the plant wrapped while you hold it in the centre and fill compost around it. Firm in well, particularly for tall cacti that can topple over if they're too loose.

4 FINISH with the compost level below the rim of the pot, then dress the surface with a layer of washed grit right up to the plant so that when watered the moisture will drain away from the stem.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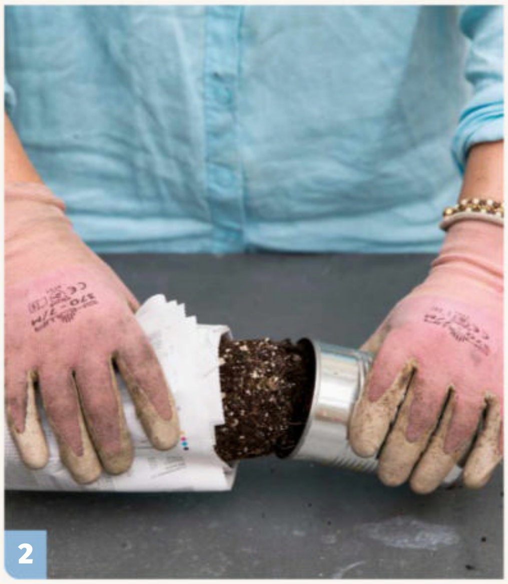
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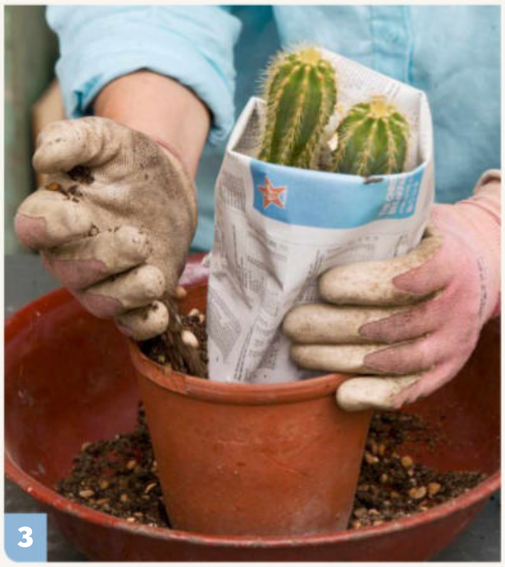
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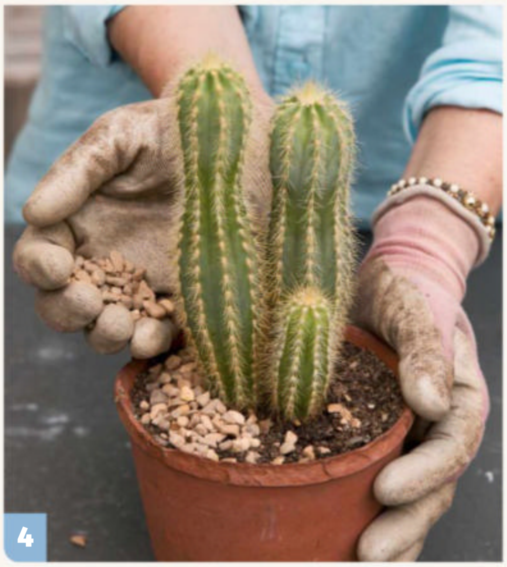
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The red flush inside Venus flytraps is a sign that it is a healthy plant

Keep your Venus flytrap happy

Ensure your Venus flytrap lasts for years by providing it with the right conditions to flourish. Their natural habitat is in temperate wetlands, so make sure they don't dry out. Stand the pot in a saucer containing 1cm of rainwater and place in a spot with plenty of light. They will tolerate low temperatures, so a windowsill, cool porch or conservatory will be fine.

Allow Venus flytraps to feed naturally – just the odd fly every few weeks is plenty and they'll attract them without help. Resist triggering the trap by hand as it will just exhaust the plant.

DON'T FORGET

- ☐ **Move plants away from exposure to strong sun if their leaves show signs of scorching**
- ☐ **Take leaf cuttings of African violets and foliage begonias**
- ☐ **Check new growth for aphids and if you see any, wipe them off with a damp cloth**
- ☐ **Repot plants that are pot bound**
- ☐ **Keep feeding plants regularly with a liquid house-plant fertiliser**

WORDS: ROSIE YEOMANS PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; PAUL DEBOIS

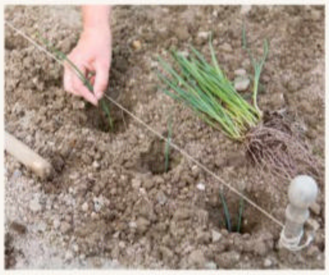
TOP TIP

It's time to sow chicory seed for plants to force and eat in winter. Witloof chicory sown now and thinned to 30cm apart will form plants that can be dug up to force the roots from October. Sow the seed 1cm deep in well-prepared soil and keep it moist. Try 'Apollo' or 'Witloof de Brussels'.

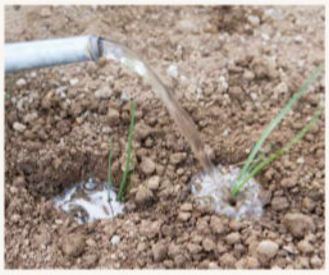
STEP BY STEP

Plant out leeks

Leeks planted now will keep you supplied all winter. Prepare the soil by digging in compost and a good dressing of general fertiliser. Trim the roots and shoots of young seedlings before planting into the ground. Gardeners in southern counties may need to cover plants with fleece until October to protect them from leek moth, which could ruin the whole crop.



1 USE a large dibber or handle to make holes 20cm apart in prepared ground, then put a plant deep into each hole.



2 DON'T fill the hole. Instead water it well without a rose attachment – the plants will root out and thicken up quickly.

WORDS: ROSIE YEOMANS. PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; JASON INGRAM; TIM SANDALL

Stems held horizontally will flower and fruit much more productively than those of plants left alone

Tie in blackberry shoots

Train blackberries to horizontal wires to keep them tidy. Stems trained along the wires this way produce more fruiting lateral shoots, too. Wrap the long stems around the wire and tie the ends in to stop it all unfurling.

Next year's fruiting canes will also be coming up from the base. Don't cut them back but keep them tidy by tying them to an upright post. If shoots grow out beyond the supports, they can be cut back to protect you from the thorns, especially at eye level.

Water after thinning to help carrots recover and to limit root fly

Care for carrot seedlings

Thin carrots when they're about 3cm tall. Use your fingers to press on the soil around the seedling you want to keep, while pulling out the seedlings around it. Aim for a final spacing of 5cm to encourage strong, straight roots.

The smell of the foliage attracts carrot fly, so work quickly and water straight away to settle the plants back in and reduce the aroma. You could also cover plants with fleece for extra protection. Keep the crop well watered.

DON'T FORGET

- ☐ **Apply tomato feed regularly to fruiting veg crops such as tomatoes, courgettes, pumpkins and chillies**
- ☐ **Take a few softwood cuttings of herbs such as marjoram and sage**
- ☐ **Enjoy final harvests of asparagus, then leave top-growth to grow tall so plants can bulk up for next year**
- ☐ **Tie in the strong new shoots of cane fruits such as blackberries, raspberries and loganberries**

Look out for chill damage

Look for cold damage on the most tender young plants. Those in the cucumber family such as squash, melons and cucumber are very vulnerable at night. Chillies, sweet peppers and even tomatoes could suffer, too.

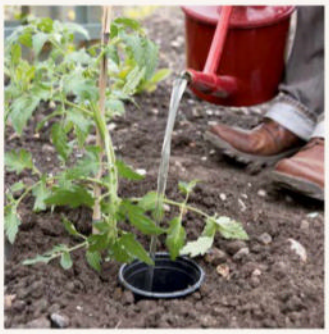
Damage appears as bleached or blackened areas on the leaves. Avoid it with a temporary cloche cover or fleece until nighttime temperatures are reliably mild. Provided the growing tip is healthy, the damaged leaves can be cut off without affecting the plant's potential to produce a good crop.

Cucumber-family plants are fragile when still young

Stake and water outdoor toms

Stake outdoor tomatoes to support the crop – cordon types up a long support to grow high and bush types with lower supports to stop the heavy trusses pulling stems to the ground, where fruits will rot. Bamboo canes are effective.

Tie the plants in against the cane with soft string every 20cm as they grow in height. It's a good idea to sink a pot in next to the plant for more effective watering.



A sunken pot makes watering easy and limits weed problems

Plant out French beans

Plant out dwarf French beans into a sunny, well drained spot in the veg garden. Arrange them in rows or in a block, giving plants about 40cm of space to make them easy to pick. If you're short of space, they'll grow well 25cm apart in rows with 45cm between them.

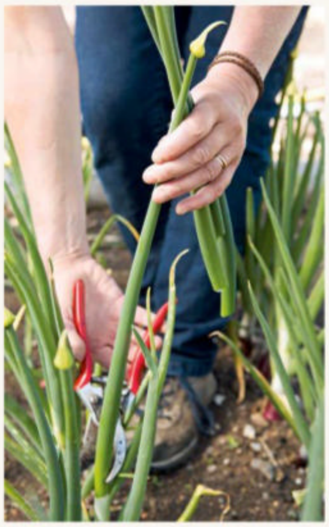
Soak plants first, then plant and firm them in well. Put a short cane next to each plant for support to stop the plant toppling over when the beans get heavy. Water them in and protect from slugs.

Make sure the soil is enriched with manure or compost before planting out

Remove flowers on onion plants

Snip out the flower stem when you see an onion bolting into flower before the bulb is ready to harvest. This stops the bulb being ruined for a little longer but signals the need to harvest those plants soon as immature bulbs. Use these in the next week or two, as bolted onions don't store well at all.

Bolting happens when the plants are stressed due to lack of water or cold temperatures. Avoid this by keeping plants routinely watered and cover them with a little fleece when unseasonably cold nights are forecast.



Onion flower stems can be used like spring onions in recipes

Next month!

- ☐ Harvest peas
- ☐ Cut lavender for drying
- ☐ Keep sweet peas going
- ☐ Feed and support dahlias as they grow
- ☐ Water and weed around summer bedding plants

A *wildlife* retreat

You don't need a huge space to welcome a wide range of wildlife to your garden, as Katrina Roche's small urban garden proves. By maximising your space, you can create habitats for birds, bees, pond life and other creatures

PHOTOS PAUL DEBOIS

Katrina Roche, Kew, London

"When the pond is full of frogs singing in the evening, it's just delightful, and I love knowing that it also supports dragonflies and damselflies"

Katrina has transformed a small London plot that was dominated by a lawn and an old shed into a lush, plant-filled oasis for all sorts of creatures

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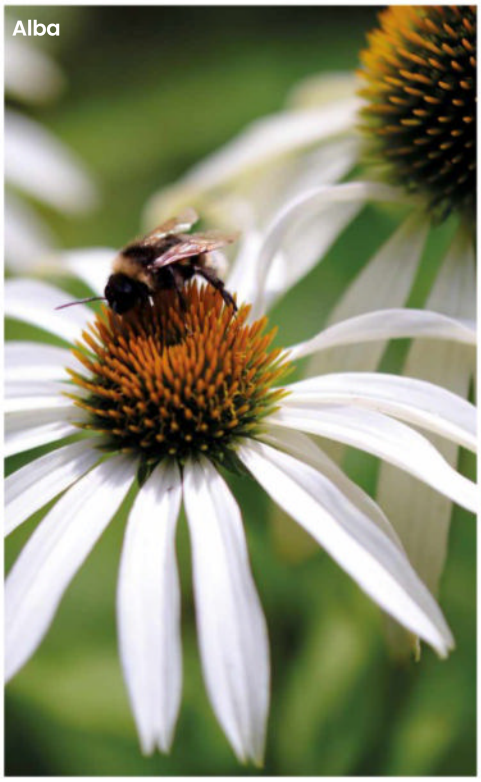

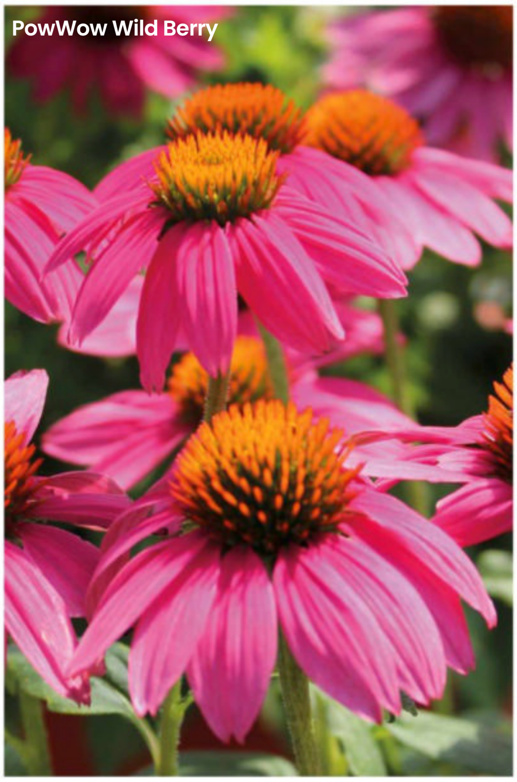

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GWHY

> “I took out the lawn, as I’d been gradually nibbling away at it. This made the borders even deeper – just to fit in more plants, really”

Despite its relatively small size, Katrina Roche’s back garden in Kew, south-west London, is a haven for wildlife, having evolved over three decades to support a host of creatures including nesting birds, pollinating insects and frogs. Like many gardens, it took a while to get the balance right, with a lot of thought going into creating a network of interconnecting habitats between pond and borders, and vertically planted fences with an overspill of greenery from a neighbouring garden.

What was the garden like when you moved here?

That was 32 years ago. It was literally a square of lawn with very narrow borders around the edge and a rather dilapidated shed in the far left-hand corner, which happens to be the sunniest part of the garden. In the middle of the lawn stood a very narrow, 5m-high conifer. That was one of the first things to go. After that, I widened the borders, removed another tree and created a shallow pond with a liner.

Then, about eight years ago, I took out the lawn completely, as I’d been gradually nibbling away at it over time, and replaced it with gravel. This made the borders even deeper – just to fit in more plants, really. At the same time, I installed the rectangular pond, added a pergola and turned the far end of the garden into a seating area to enjoy the sun. Before that, the space wasn’t being used to its full potential because the garden faces north. Leaving that area underused for so long was an odd mistake, really. Turning it into a seating area made sense.

What were your biggest challenges?

Probably disguising the wooden fencing. In winter, it still looks dominant, but the evergreen star

① Getting rid of her lawn allowed Katrina more space to add a variety of plants that would attract a wider range of wildlife

② Placing a bird box about 2-5m high and among foliage means that birds nesting there will likely feel protected from the weather and predators

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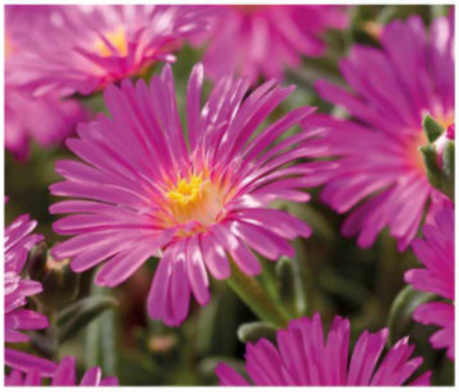

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> “I was determined to have a pond to attract frogs and other amphibians. It took a while for them to colonise, but they did”

jasmine is now well established and I’ve planted a lot of climbing roses, which help soften the space.

Another challenge was the lawn. As it shrank over time, it became more of a nuisance to mow. Deciding to remove it completely was a big dilemma, but I’m really glad I did. I sometimes wonder whether I should have kept a small patch as a mini meadow, but in terms of accessibility, the gravel is far more practical.

Did you always have wildlife in mind?

Even 30 years ago, I was determined to have a pond to attract frogs and other amphibians. It took a little while for them to colonise, but they eventually did. When I replaced the pond, it disrupted them briefly, but they returned the following winter. Just last week, when I got back from a trip, I found frogspawn in the pond – that was really exciting.

I was conscious that the new pond was quite deep and lined with concrete, so I placed bricks at one end to help amphibians climb in and out. I’ve also focused on pollinator-friendly planting, choosing open flowers and avoiding doubles so insects can easily access the nectar. Last May, I planted wildflowers in pots, including field scabious. And, of

❶ Greenery including *Iris versicolor* attracts wildlife to the pond, creating shelter above and below the surface

❷ Frogs can help protect your plants through their voracious consumption of slugs and snails

❸ As a rich source of pollen and nectar, lavender is a great plant for attracting pollinating insects such as bees

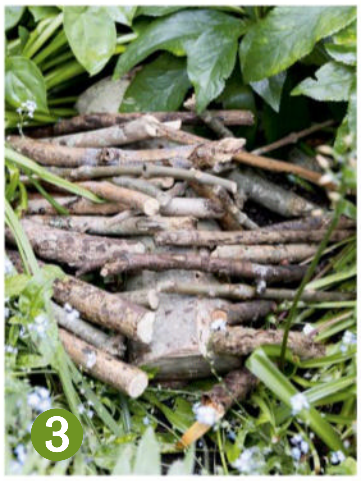
> “I’ve planted lots of climbers – jasmine, climbing roses and a Japanese quince, plus a vine”

course, I’ve always fed the birds and never used chemicals – it’s an entirely organic garden. Over the years, I’ve established a natural balance, with birds helping to keep aphid numbers in check.

There is a lot of vertical planting – how has this helped wildlife?

Vertical planting provides shelter and nesting spots for birds. The birdhouse is well hidden among the climbing plants. In spring, I saw blue tits inspecting it and, although they didn’t nest, it was encouraging to see. I’ve planted lots of climbers – star jasmine, climbing roses and a Japanese quince, plus a vine on the left-hand side. Last year, I added an ornamental cherry tree, and I’ve already seen birds roosting in it and eating the small fruits.

The ivy overspilling from next door is another valuable habitat – it flowers late, providing food for pollinators and birds in winter. The overgrown areas have also become corridors for wildlife. Initially, I was dismayed when things got a bit unruly, but now I see it as a positive. Blackbirds and dunnocks flit in and out, and something is using the wool from my nesting-material holder.



How important is pollinator-friendly planting?

When you read about the decline in insect populations, it really highlights the need to provide as much habitat as possible. With so many outdoor spaces being paved over, every pollinator-friendly plant helps. I’ve added lots of salvias and open-flowered roses

❶ Katrina uses climbing plants to optimise space, clothe garden structures and give shelter to birds

❷ With a maximum height x spread of 4m x 2m, cherry ‘Snow Goose’ is a good choice of tree for a small garden

❸ A pile of logs offers hiding spaces for insects, which in turn attracts frogs and other creatures looking for food

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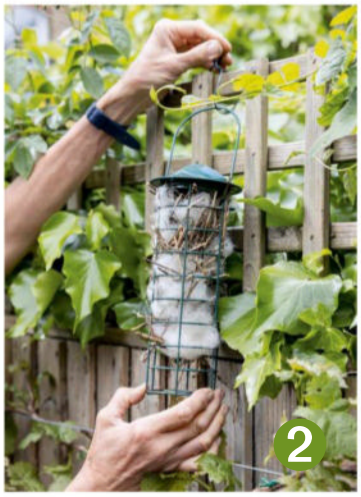
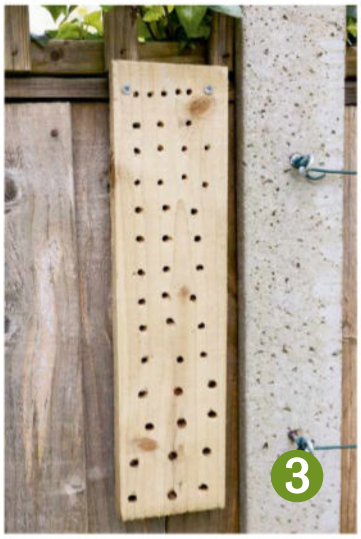
> “I have a hanging bird bath, which I keep topped up to provide water to birds and insects alike”





① **A hanging bird bath offers a place for birds and insects to drink and bathe without taking up much space**

② **A feeder packed with small twigs and wool provides nesting materials for birds**

③ **Katrina drilled holes of different sizes into a block of untreated wood, converting it into an insect hotel**

like White Star, which are excellent for bees and hoverflies. A friend gave me a pale-lemon snapdragon a few years ago. We all thought it would last just one season, but it's still going strong. The bees love it.

What are the benefits of having a pond and is a small one still okay?

It definitely doesn't have to be big. Mine is about 1m x 70cm – not huge, but it's quite deep. A shallower pond would still be beneficial for amphibians. I've seen dragonflies around it, though I'm not sure if they're nesting in the surrounding plants. Either way, I just love having a pond in the garden. It feels essential.

How else do you support creatures such as bees, butterflies and bugs?

I've added an untreated wooden post with holes drilled into it as a simple insect hotel. There's also a patch of waste ground behind the fence that is full of nettles. I leave them because they're a food source for some butterfly species.

I've also built a small log pile to provide shelter for invertebrates. My neighbour has had stag beetles in their garden, so I'm hoping that they might eventually make their way to mine.

Does your garden support wildlife year-round?

Yes. I feed the birds all year, using a coconut shell filled with a fatty mix of nuts and seeds. I have a hanging bird bath, which I keep topped up to provide water for birds and insects alike. For early pollinators, I planted lots of spring bulbs such as narcissi. I also leave rose hips on my climbing roses as a winter food source. The squirrels usually get to them first, but I've seen finches feeding on my 'Rambling Rector' rose hips.

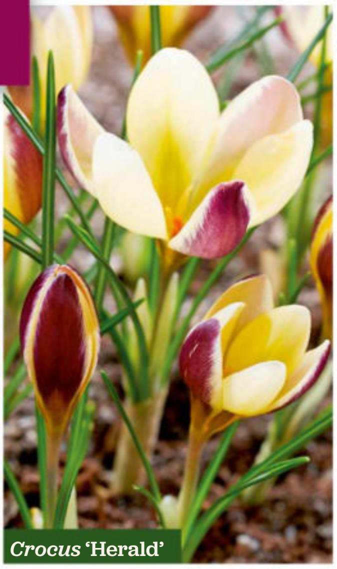
Which elements of your garden are you most proud of?

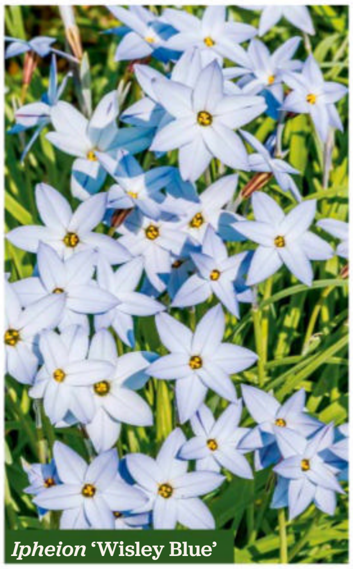
Probably the pond. When it's full of frogs singing in the evening, it's just delightful, and I love knowing that it also supports dragonflies and damselflies. Seeing the first frogspawn each year is always a highlight.

More recently, I'm really pleased with how well the cherry tree has established – it fits beautifully into a small space. And overall, I think I've done a good job of disguising the fence, at least for most of the year!

NEXT MONTH We visit a shade-loving tiered garden that has multiple seating areas and a series of planted-up steps

Allium 'Lucky Balloons'


Crocus 'Herald'


Ipheion 'Wisley Blue'

Fritillaria 'Early Fantasy'

PRE-ORDER YOUR FAVOURITES NOW!

Tulipa 'Pink Star'

Iris reticulata 'Blue Note'

Narcissus 'Easter Party'

Anemone blanda 'Charmer'

Tulipa 'Annika'

SAVE 15% ON SPRING BULBS

The early bird catches the worm or, in this case, a 15% saving on Farmer Gracy's exciting new range of spring-flowering bulbs to plant this autumn! With this year's spring displays still fresh in your mind, now's a great time to plan and recreate planting styles and combinations that inspired you, or choose something beautiful to fill any gaps in the border that you may have spotted.

Autumn planting brings excitement and anticipation to the months following summer, so it is worth planning ahead. Order your bulbs now for delivery in August/September.

■ ***Allium* 'Lucky Balloons'**
Multiple stems holding large, pink, globe flowerheads.
Height x Spread 50cm x 20cm
Flowers May-Jun
3 bulbs ~~£7.65~~ **£6.50**

■ ***Crocus* 'Herald'**
Earliest crocus. Contrasting pale-yellow and plum petals.
H x S 10cm x 5cm **F** Feb-Mar
10 bulbs ~~£5.90~~ **£5.02**

■ ***Ipheion* 'Wisley Blue'**
Fragrant, silvery-blue, star-shaped flowers. Narrow leaves.
H x S 20cm x 20cm **F** Mar-Apr
25 bulbs ~~£5.25~~ **£4.46**

■ ***Fritillaria* 'Early Fantasy'**
Tall stems bearing hanging clusters of orangey-pink flowers.
H x S 70cm x 20cm
F Apr-Jun 1 bulb ~~£6.50~~ **£5.53**

■ ***Tulipa* 'Pink Star'**
Peony-like tulip, with rosy pink and coppery-apricot petals.
H x S 40cm x 15cm **F** Apr-May
10 bulbs ~~£7.90~~ **£6.72**

■ ***Iris reticulata* 'Blue Note'**
Dwarf iris with deep-purple to blue petals and white markings.
H x S 15cmx 10cm **F** Feb-Mar
20 bulbs ~~£5.40~~ **£4.59**

■ ***Narcissus* 'Easter Party'**
Large, frilly-edged cups in peach and yellow. A great naturaliser.
H x S 35cm x 15cm **F** Mar-Apr
5 bulbs ~~£5.90~~ **£5.02**

■ ***Anemone blanda* 'Charmer'**
Produces a carpet of rich-pink flowers that will spread. Ideal for a naturalistic garden.
H x S 15cm x 15cm **F** Apr-May
25 bulbs ~~£5.50~~ **£4.68**

■ ***Tulipa* 'Annika'**
Three blooms per bulb, in shades of soft pink to fuchsia.
H x S 20cm x 10cm **F** Mar-Apr
10 bulbs ~~£7.90~~ **£6.72**

2 EASY WAYS TO ORDER NOW

farmergracy.co.uk/spring
Use code ***GWJUN25*** *Please add £4.99 P&P to your order*

Scan QR code and enter code at checkout

FARMER GRACY

Terms & conditions Offer ends 30 June 2025. Despatch August/September. Discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount code. Payment taken at time of ordering. While stocks last.

Enter by midday on 9 June

Last chance to enter!

Enter this year's **Gardens of the Year competition** to win a photoshoot for the magazine and a luxurious holiday to Italy's **Cilento coast** worth £7,000 – but you only have until **9 June**

If your garden wins the Judges' Choice Award, you'll receive a luxury holiday to the picturesque Cilento coast of Italy

Been thinking of entering Gardens of the Year 2025? Now is the time to share your creativity, hard work and passion, before the competition closes at midday 9 June 2025. You never know, you could be one of our finalists, with the chance to win a relaxing, week-long holiday for two on the verdant Italian coast worth £7,000 (Judges' Choice Award), or a seven-night stay in the Shropshire countryside with family and friends, staying in a stylish cabin with hot tub, worth £3,000 (People's Choice Award).

We're looking for gardens from all over the UK – and no plot is too big or too small. Previous shortlisted entries have included flower-filled allotments, tiny urban balconies and sprawling country gardens. We want to see your creations, so gather your photos now – between 6 and 10 images plus a 'before' shot and one showing you in the garden – and add them to the short entry form at **GardenersWorld.com/garden-competition**. It's the perfect time of year to show your garden at its best.

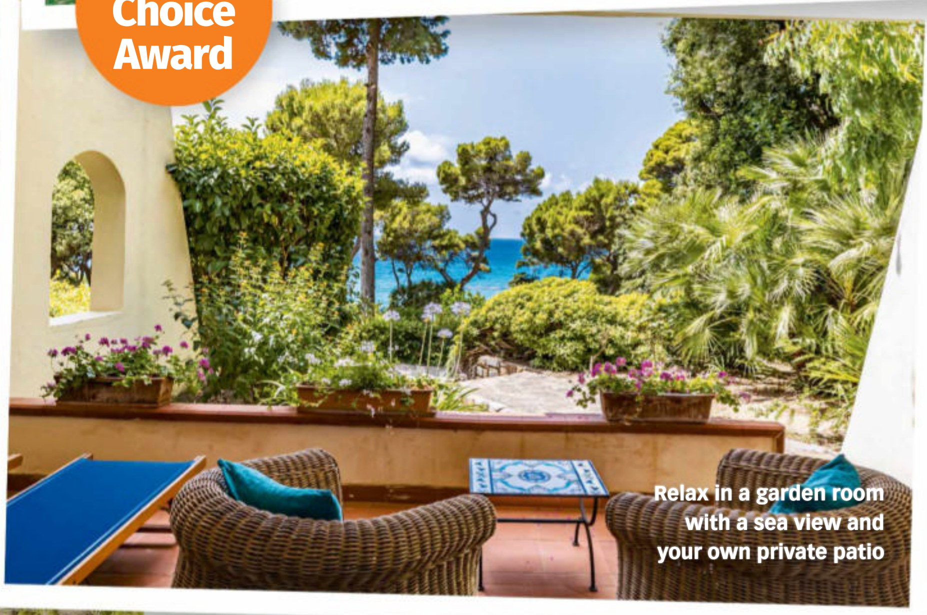
We'll then pick our six finalists, all of whom will be featured in the magazine, showcasing their gardens and the ideas and creativity involved in them, shot by a professional photographer. Our expert judging panel, including TV regulars Alan Titchmarsh and Arit Anderson, alongside award-winning garden designer Ann-Marie Powell and *BBC Gardeners' World Magazine* Editor Kevin Smith, will then decide who wins their Judges' Choice Award, while *GW Magazine* readers will vote on who should receive our People's Choice Award.

It could be your garden that wins this year, so go on, enter now!

Gardens of the Year
COMPETITION 2025

Hotel Palazzo Belmonte is set in beautiful gardens

Judges' Choice Award


Relax in a garden room with a sea view and your own private patio

What you could win

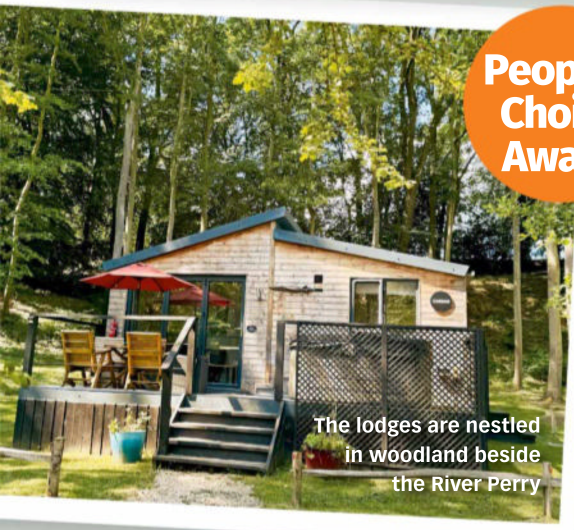
- **All finalists** will be awarded a professional photoshoot of their garden and will be featured in *BBC Gardeners' World Magazine* during 2025-26.

- **The winner of the Judges' Choice Award** will receive a seven-night Italian holiday for two worth £7,000, staying at Hotel Palazzo Belmonte on the Cilento coast, south of Naples. You'll have a ground-floor room with private terrace and sea view, with flights, car hire and breakfasts included. The hotel is set in lush gardens with an outdoor poor and pristine sandy beach. You can also explore the nearby town of Santa Maria di Castellabate and the natural beauty of the Cilento National Park. *long-travel.co.uk/palazzo-belmonte*

LONGTRAVEL

- **The winner of the People's Choice Award** will receive a seven-night holiday for up to six people (travel not included), worth £3,000, in the award-winning Riverside Cabins, set in peaceful rural Shropshire. You'll stay in a boutique self-catering lodge on the banks of the River Perry, with three bedrooms, a private outdoor space and hot tub. The welcome hamper includes breakfast and a BBQ box of local ingredients. During your stay, you can visit nearby Shrewsbury, explore local walking trails, spot the plentiful wildlife and even try fishing, or simply kick back, enjoy the peace and watch the stars. *riverside-cabins.co.uk*

People's Choice Award


The lodges are nestled in woodland beside the River Perry

Cook up a feast in the Smokehouse BBQ and outdoor dining area

How to enter

1 GO TO GardenersWorld.com/garden-competition to enter

2 Upload between 6 and 10 photos and tell us how you created your garden. Choose photos that show broad areas of your garden, not individual plants, and picture it at its best, either this year or from last summer onwards. If possible, we'd also like to see the garden before you transformed it, plus a photo of you in your garden.

3 ENTER by midday on **9 June 2025**

If your garden is selected as a finalist, we will contact you in June to arrange a date for photography, which must be completed by mid-August.

PROMOTER: IMMEDIATE MEDIA COMPANY LONDON LIMITED (COMPANY NO. 06189487).
RESIDENTS OF THE UK AND CHANNEL ISLANDS AGED 18+ CAN ENTER.

For full details of the prize and terms and conditions, see
GardenersWorld.com/garden-competition

BBC

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12-15 June 2025
NEC Birmingham

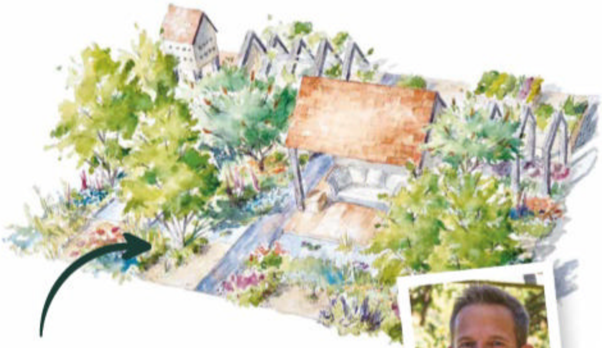
Inspiration | Expert advice | Shopping | Entertainment

It's Show time!

We can't wait to reveal the **Show Gardens**, **Beautiful Borders**, **garden experts**, **top nurseries**, **exhibitors** and features coming to this year's Show, to inspire you! Join us there and you'll be sure to go home with a head full of ideas and arms full of shopping, plants and kit. Plus, get inspired to **Make a Metre Matter** as our series of in-magazine ideas are brought to life by **Pip Probert** and the headline Plant Based Garden designed by *Gardeners' World* presenter, **Nick Bailey**.

VISIT bbcgardenersworldlive.com
for more info and to book tickets

Learn from gardening maestros including Monty Don!



Walk through Nick's garden with homestead vibe and Make a Metre Matter inspiration

SHOW GARDENS SHOW YOU HOW!

Experience inspiring gardens for ideas for your space. The **New Build Garden** will showcase savvy use of repurposed materials for a backyard paradise, the Garden Organic **Rooted in Nature** garden shines a spotlight on homegrown food, and **Greenfingers' Anniversary Garden** is a child's outdoor haven. Plus many more. Visit the website to explore this year's Gardens and let the inspiration start!

Get water-saving ideas in QVC's Reflective Retreat

Includes entry to the goodFOOD SHOW SUMMER Sponsored by LEXUS

Readers save 15% off tickets* - quote GWR8 (ends 9 June)

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MORE BORDERS THAN EVER!

A lot of garden for your space!

To help you make a challenging space a special place, get ideas from the **Beautiful Borders**. For top ways to welcome pollinators, the **Super Blooms Border** has you covered; for creative spaces for kids, the **Wonder Garden Border** is a must-see; and for a flavoursome space, **Apple Core Values Border** will be up your street. Plus, the **LEGO® Group** presents a Showcase Garden incorporating LEGO bricks into a playful design to delight and inspire young gardeners of the future. Explore them all!

Book your tickets

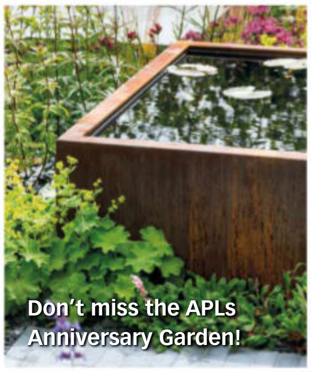
The Sunflower Power Garden symbolises health and hope

Gardens to heal

The **Medicinal Garden**, by the Midlands Air Ambulance, tells a story of survival through plants and nature, and their power to mend, whilst Derby College's **Vihara Meditation Garden** is a tranquil space that encourages mindfulness and a sense of peace. Created for children, the **Garden of Reflection** shows how a garden can serve as a powerful tool for wellbeing, through shared responsibility.

Water conservation in action!

The hugely popular **APL Avenue** returns, themed "You don't miss the water until the well runs dry". Find innovative rills, pools that capture rain, habitats for wildlife that rely on fresh water and much more! Created by **APL landscapers**, these gardens inspire and delight!


Don't miss the APLs Anniversary Garden!

ADAM'S TASTING TABLE

This year, Adam Frost returns with top chefs and foodie experts including Si King, James Martin and the Good Food team, for a series of conversations about cuisine and cultivation. Drop by to listen and learn, and be entertained in abundance!

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDING ENTRY TO THE GOOD FOOD SHOW SUMMER

LEARN, MAKE AND ENJOY

As well as the **BBC Gardeners' World Live Theatre**, book onto a **Botanical Cocktail** workshop or seats in the all-star **Big Kitchen**.†

GOOD FOOD ALL DAY

Have a tasty day of treats from the **Producers' Village**, **street food**, **Drinks Pavilion**, or even in the **Good Food Restaurant**.

FLOWER POWER

The **Floral Marquee** and **Plant Village** are a one-stop shop for all your plant needs, along with 100s of **gardening exhibitors**!

A GREAT FAMILY DAY OUT

School Wheelbarrows, family **activities** from Frances Tophill's new **kids garden** book, **Hot Off the Shelf** foodie trail and more!

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Garden globetrotting: *Nevada*

With majestic parks, spectacular scenery and plants in unexpected places, Kevin Smith discovers that there is more to the US state of Nevada than first meets the eye

Golden-leaved aspen trees stand out against deep-green bristlecone pines

Kevin Smith, Editor

Arriving in the bright lights and desert of Las Vegas, I wasn't sure what I'd find to satisfy the appetite of a garden and nature lover. But a road trip north took me to breathtaking state parks with landscapes and scenery I never could have imagined. If you think Nevada is all about gambling and cacti, then think again – it offers so much more, especially if you drive.

I expected to see a lot of cacti in Nevada, so it was no surprise to find a whole garden dedicated to them. Just a 15-minute drive from the bright lights of the Las Vegas strip is the Ethel M Botanical Cactus Garden. I spotted many plants, not just cacti, that were familiar to me, plus others I'd never seen before that were obviously suited to the harsh weather that Nevada endures.

The otherworldly rock formations of the Valley of Fire State Park are a couple of hours north of Las Vegas, but it's worth the drive. There's very little plant life, but the scenery is magnificent. Everything here is extreme, from the vibrant-red of the rock to the intense heat – over 43°C –once outside the comfort of an air-conditioned car. But there was something thrilling about being in such an exposed and potentially dangerous place.

Further north took me to Cathedral Gorge State Park. The temperature was about 10°C cooler and nothing could prepare me for its beauty. It's a little like the Grand Canyon, but not as big, and when I visited I was the only person there. I'll never forget the solace and silence I experienced. There were some signs of life, with plants clinging to the rock and the odd tree surviving against the odds.

I continued north to the Great Basin National Park. The temperature dipped further and the landscape became much greener with bristlecone pine trees covering the mountains – at times the scenery reminded me of Scotland. It was autumn when I visited and aspen trees were full of colour, lighting up the landscape like fire, an

PHOTOS: NEIL HEPWORTH; JASON INGRAM

The beehive-shaped ovens at Ward Charcoal Ovens State Historic Park, with the Egan Mountain Range in the background

unexpected spectacle. The area is known for its stargazing, so I sat outside and looked up as night fell. I've never seen so many shooting stars, with the Milky Way cutting the night sky in two – just magic.

Still in the Great Basin National Park, I took the 40-mile Success Loop Scenic Drive. It's not for the faint-hearted with the dirt road climbing and winding through the mountains, but it is worth dedicating a couple of hours to the trip if you're a confident driver. The landscape is incredible and there were masses of aspens in full autumn colour, which made everything even more striking. There was plenty of wildlife to see too and, if you're feeling super adventurous, remote camping spots allow you to fully immerse yourself in the high-desert landscape.

If you like a bit of history, make a quick pit stop to Ward Charcoal Ovens State Historic Park. The charcoal ovens were built and used in the 1870s as part of the silver ore mining industry and are in great condition. The landscape the ovens sit in is beautiful and you have to drive a dirt track to reach them.

Back in Las Vegas, I called in at Springs Preserve on the outskirts of the city. This 180-acre botanical garden celebrates the city's history, culture and community, with a focus on preserving the environment and natural resources. The garden is free to enter and well worth a visit, with cacti, roses, herbs, veg gardens and more on display. It's a great educational resource and it was fab to see plenty of places for children to learn and interact with the natural world.

■ ESSENTIAL INFO

You can visit Nevada year-round, although temperatures can be blisteringly hot in the summer and sometimes chilly in winter – spring or autumn are ideal times to go. Visit ***travelnevada.com*** *for inspiration and examples of road-trip itineraries, and consider the Hidden Canyon Retreat (****hiddencanyonretreat.com****) and the Overland Hotel (****overlandhotel.com****) for special places to stay.*

Inspired by Nevada

The plants of Nevada are resilient, with succulents (usually mulched with gravel) giving the gardens their signature look. Many are tender and won't survive the UK's wet and cold, but there are some plants that will give you the desert look and still thrive in our weather.

Sagebrush thrives in Nevada, while here wormwood grows well in a sunny spot in free-draining soil

ARTEMISIA

Artemisia tridentata (sagebrush) grows wild in Nevada, but the related *Artemisia absinthium* (wormwood) grows well in the UK climate. This is a highly aromatic perennial that is used to create absinthe and is a great natural pest repellent. With its bright-yellow flowers and silver-grey leaves, wormwood provides contrast and interest, much like its desert-dwelling cousin.

OPUNTIA – PRICKLY PEAR CACTUS

A Nevada staple, the prickly pear can be grown inside as a house plant and taken outside during the summer months under the right conditions. Their fleshy stems are designed to store water, so they're able to cope with long periods of drought. This makes them an excellent, low-maintenance house plant.

AGAVE

I saw lots of agave in Nevada, in a vast range of sizes. It is possible to grow some species outdoors in the UK, but they must either be brought indoors in autumn or protected over winter to prevent damage. Many agaves can also be grown in pots, ideal for indoor gardening or moving between the garden and conservatory with the seasons. Agave are happiest in a warm, sunny environment with free-draining soil and minimal watering.

Agave will grow outdoors in summer but bring them inside in autumn

Given the right conditions, opuntia make ideal house plants in the UK

PHOTOS: GETTY/DMITRI ZELENEVSKI; NEIL HEPWORTH

NEXT MONTH Discover Sicily, Italy's fertile volcanic island and home to lush botanic gardens

Gardeners' World offer

EUROPEAN RIVER CRUISES

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Lucerne

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- Six guided tours: **Rüdesheim**, **Koblenz**, **Strasbourg**, **Speyer**, **Bernese Oberland** with **scenic railway**, and the **Black Forest**
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Your tour includes

- **Return flights** or Eurostar from London St Pancras (supplement may apply), plus transfers
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- Full-board dining (except one lunch), plus **Chef's Dinner**
- **Free drinks** package†
- Free on-board tea, coffee and Wi-Fi (speeds may vary)
- Expert **Riviera cruise director** and concierge
- All port charges/airport taxes
- 20kg+ checked luggage

**More dates May 2025-October 2026*

Jungfrau railway

Timetable

- **DAY 1** Arrival in Cologne
- **DAY 2** Koblenz
- **DAY 3** Rhine Gorge and Rüdesheim
- **DAY 4** Speyer
- **DAY 5** Strasbourg
- **DAY 6** Alsace wine route or Breisach/Black Forest
- **DAY 7** Lucerne and Bernese Oberland
- **DAY 8** Return home

Paris

The Seine, Paris and Normandy

From £1,799, 7 nights, 8 days – departs 23 October 2025*

From Paris we commence our cruise along the beautiful and majestic Seine into the heart of historic and picturesque Normandy. Catch the remarkable sights that line the Seine, with visits to Honfleur, Richard the Lionheart's imposing castle and a charming ancient fishing port. *Return flights available from several regional UK airports.*

Experiences

- Three guided tours: **Honfleur**, **Rouen** and **Paris**
- Optional visits to **Bayeux** and the **D-Day Normandy Beaches** or **Taste of Normandy** tour.
- Four visits: **Les Andelys**, charming Caudebec-en-Caux, **Claude Monet's house** and garden, and quaint **Vernon**

Your tour includes

- **Return flights** or Eurostar from London St Pancras (supplement may apply), plus transfers
- **7 nights** on a five-star ship
- Your choice of spacious cabins with window or **French balcony**
- Full-board dining (except one lunch), plus **Chef's Dinner**
- **Free drinks** package†
- Free on-board tea, coffee and Wi-Fi (speeds may vary)
- Expert **Riviera cruise director** and concierge
- All port charges/airport taxes
- 20kg+ checked luggage

** More dates June 2025-October 2026*

Vernon

Timetable

- **DAY 1** Arrival in Paris
- **DAY 2** Les Andelys
- **DAY 3** Rouen
- **DAY 4** Caudebec
- **DAY 5** Honfleur
- **DAY 6** Giverny and Vernon
- **DAY 7** Paris
- **DAY 8** Return home

TO FIND OUT MORE AND TO BOOK

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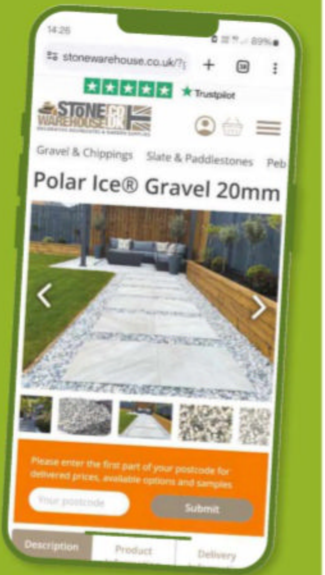

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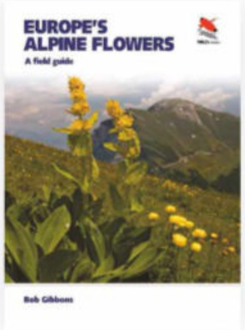

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144 Growing abundance
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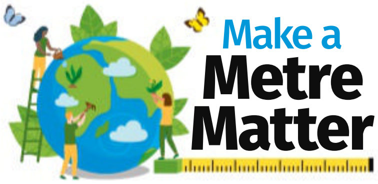
Make the most of your garden over the coming months with 27 pages of inspiration for relaxed outdoor dining and a feast of homegrown crops



SARSON'S
BEST BUY

113 Small-space summer harvests
If you only have a metre to spare, you can still pack in the crops with our tips on simple salad growing

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126 Pretty and productive
Make homegrown veg the star attraction as Lucy Bellamy helps you create stylish crops in pots

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Get outside more this summer with the latest and best products to help you create and enjoy non-stop garden meals

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Make a Metre Matter

Save £££s on salads

Growing your own salad is an easy way to reduce your carbon footprint, with the added bonus that it can save you money on your weekly shop. Bagged salad leaves are a popular choice at the supermarket, but they often come with a high environmental price tag.

Unless salad is certified as organic, it's likely to have been grown using synthetic pesticides and fertilisers that can contaminate soil and water. Transportation (often from Europe) and refrigeration add to the environmental cost, and peat is still used to produce leafy salads in the UK. But all these issues can be avoided by growing your own. You don't even need a large garden – a square-metre patch can produce an array of tasty leaves all year without the need for synthetic chemicals, peat or plastic packaging. And, if you start sowing seeds now, you can be harvesting your first fresh salad leaves in as little as four weeks.

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Your square-metre salad patch

◀ BUY ORGANIC

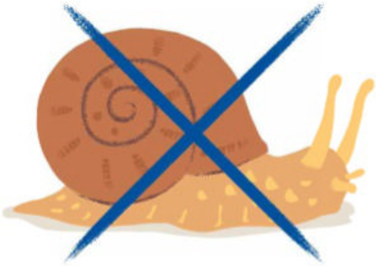
Buy certified organic seeds from a reputable seller. Organic seeds are harvested from plants grown without synthetic pesticides or fertilisers, which means they'll have had less impact on the environment.

▼ MINIMISE WASTE

Minimise waste if you have a salad glut by sharing with friends and neighbours. You can also make salad leaves into delicious soups that can be eaten immediately or frozen for later use.

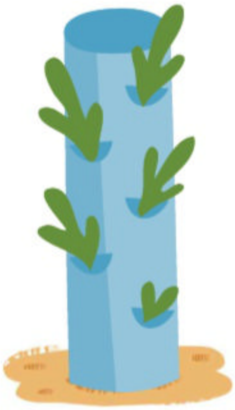
▶ VARIETIES

Choose cut-and-come-again varieties so you reduce waste by picking small amounts of salad leaves as and when you need them. Loose-leaf lettuce and other popular cut-and-come-again salads are often sold in mixed packs like 'Speedy Mix', 'Herb Mix' or 'Spicy Mix'. There are also selections designed for different seasons, giving you a good variety of leaves throughout the year.



▲ PEST RESISTANT

Sow pest- and disease-resistant varieties to avoid the need to use synthetic chemicals. Some lettuce varieties such as 'Little Gem' are resistant to lettuce root aphid, while corn salad 'Vit' has good resistance to powdery mildew. Some growers find that red and purple salad leaves are less attractive to slugs and snails than green varieties.



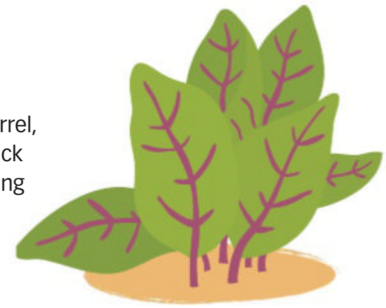
▲ GROW VERTICALLY

Grow salad vertically to make the most of your space. If your square-metre patch backs onto a wall or fence, you can sow salad leaves and herbs in spare pots or guttering safely attached to the vertical surface. Plants grown in this way will, however, require more water than those in the ground.

◀ IN SITU

Sow seeds in situ to reduce the need for plastic seed trays and compost. If you sow in pots initially (so that plants are less vulnerable to slugs and snails), reuse old, clean trays, choose wooden seed trays or make your own compostable paper pots.

ILLUSTRATIONS: IAN CUNLIFFE



▶ PERENNIAL

Include some perennial salad plants, such as sorrel, in your square-metre plot. Perennials will die back over winter and produce new growth in the spring without the need to buy and sow more seeds.

◀ HARDY SALADS

Grow hardy salads, such as winter purslane, land cress or corn salad to provide ground cover through the winter. This prevents the soil leaching nutrients and makes it more effective at storing carbon. Harvesting salads all year round also reduces the need to buy bagged leaves that are likely to have been transported long distances, especially outside the UK growing season.

▲ SAVE SEEDS

Save salad seeds to reduce your use of resources in the future. As long as you've sown open-pollinated varieties rather than F1 hybrids, you can save seed for the next growing season. Open-pollinated seeds help maintain genetic diversity, which makes it easier to breed plants that can adapt to the arrival of new pests and diseases as well as to the unpredictable weather conditions caused by climate change.

◀ REDUCE WATER

Reduce water usage by collecting rainwater and choose salad plants that can cope with drier conditions, such as wild rocket, especially if your area suffers from regular droughts. Mulch around plants to help reduce evaporation, and water plants in the morning and afternoon in hot weather, so they have access to moisture during the day and to prevent bolting.

Dos & don'ts

- ✓ Do choose varieties that suit your plot's soil and aspect, as they're more likely to grow well and produce bumper crops
- ✓ Do use peat-free seed compost for sowing in pots
- ✓ Do add a couple of herbs if you have space in your patch to give extra flavour to your salads
- ✓ Do plant a leafy brassica, such as mizuna or pak choi, outside netting as food for the caterpillars of small and large white butterflies
- ✓ Do swap unwanted seeds and seedlings with friends and neighbours
- ✓ Do leave some seedheads of salad crops such as lettuce to provide a winter feast for seed-eating birds such as goldfinches

- ✗ Don't grow veg you dislike
- ✗ Don't use netting made from petroleum-based plastic to protect your plants – choose jute or corn starch-based netting instead
- ✗ Don't dig your plot as you'll release carbon from the soil and damage beneficial networks of mycorrhizal fungi
- ✗ Don't buy new gardening equipment if you can borrow them from friends or a local community tools library
- ✗ Don't save seed that's protected by Plant Breeders' Rights without permission, as this is against the law

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Make a
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Matter

Next month

Create a habitat haven

and have fun with log piles, habitat stacks and more

Grow the best salads

For tasty, productive and easy-to-grow salad varieties, **Rich Heathcoate** puts lettuces, radishes, cucumbers, beetroots and spring onions to the test

Salads are a real summer joy – crisp, fresh and healthy – and growing your own has masses of advantages over buying your crops from a shop. Homegrown salads are way more delicious, fresh and nutritious, while also slashing food miles, plastic packaging and waste. Whether you have sweeping acres or a small balcony, are new to gardening or an experienced hand, growing salad is for everyone.

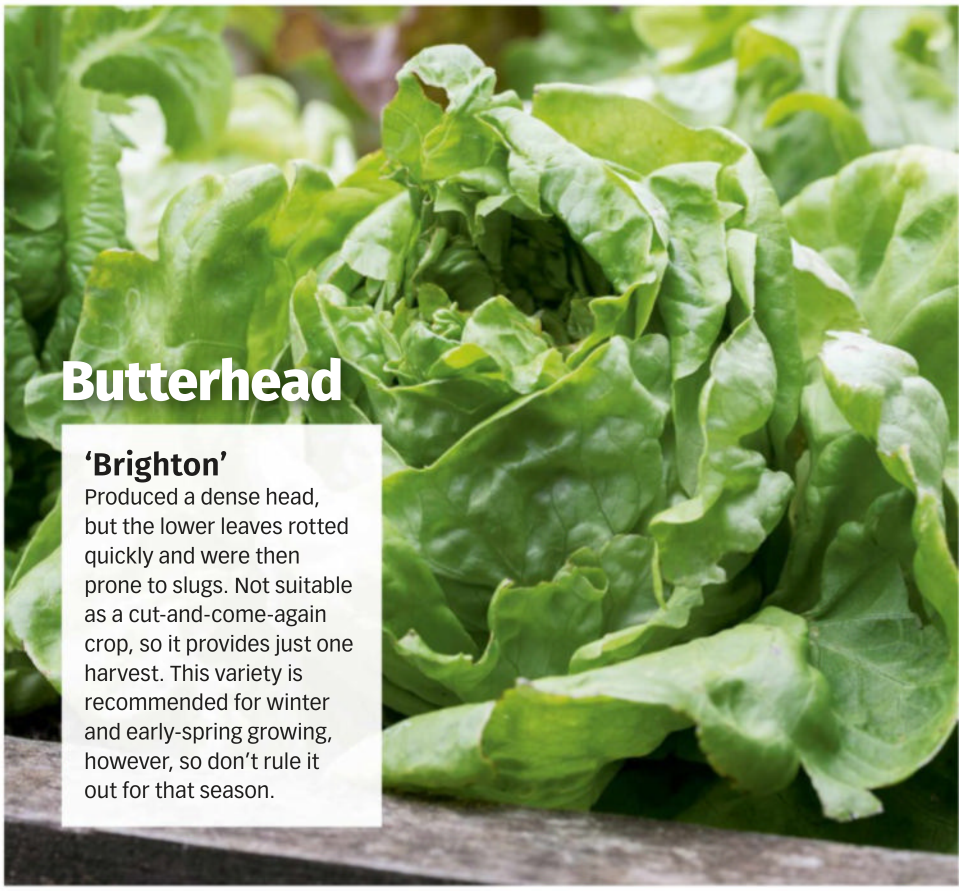
The choice of salad crops and varieties is endless and while this can be exciting, it can also be daunting trying to narrow down what you want to grow. To help you with this, we trialled 26 different varieties of salad ingredients. Read on to discover our top tips for choosing which delicious salad varieties to grow this summer.

Lettuces

Is it a salad without lettuce? I don't think so! I trialled nine varieties – three each of butterhead (with a tight central ball and looser edges, like Savoy cabbages), cos (rugby-ball shaped) and oakleaf (producing a dome of leaves).

Lettuce can be much more than a background ingredient – the right variety can add incredible colour, flavour and texture. These were all easy to get growing, but some varieties held their leaves better than others, and some bolted.

PHOTOS: NEIL HEPWORTH; JASON INGRAM

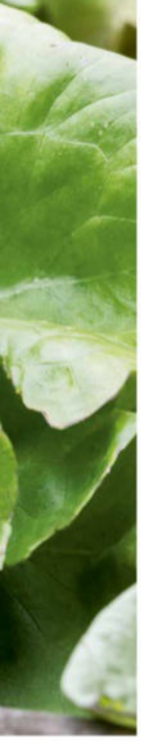


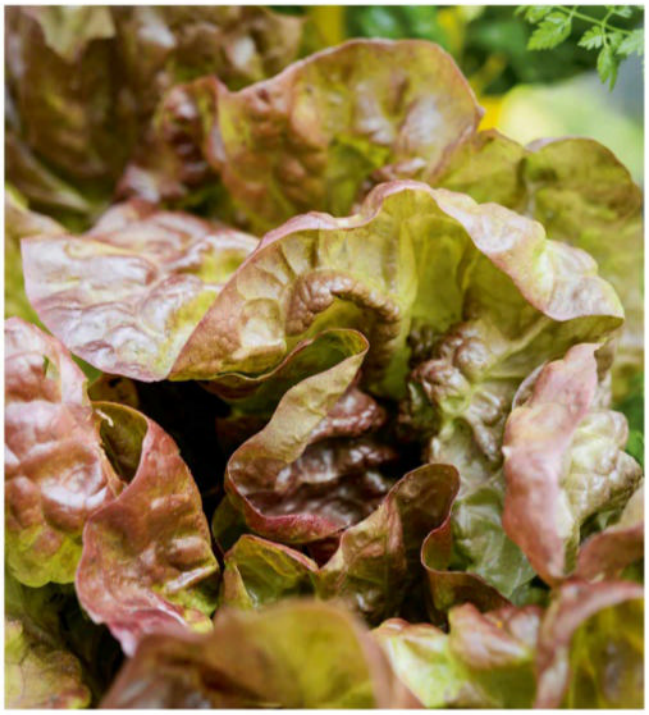
Butterhead

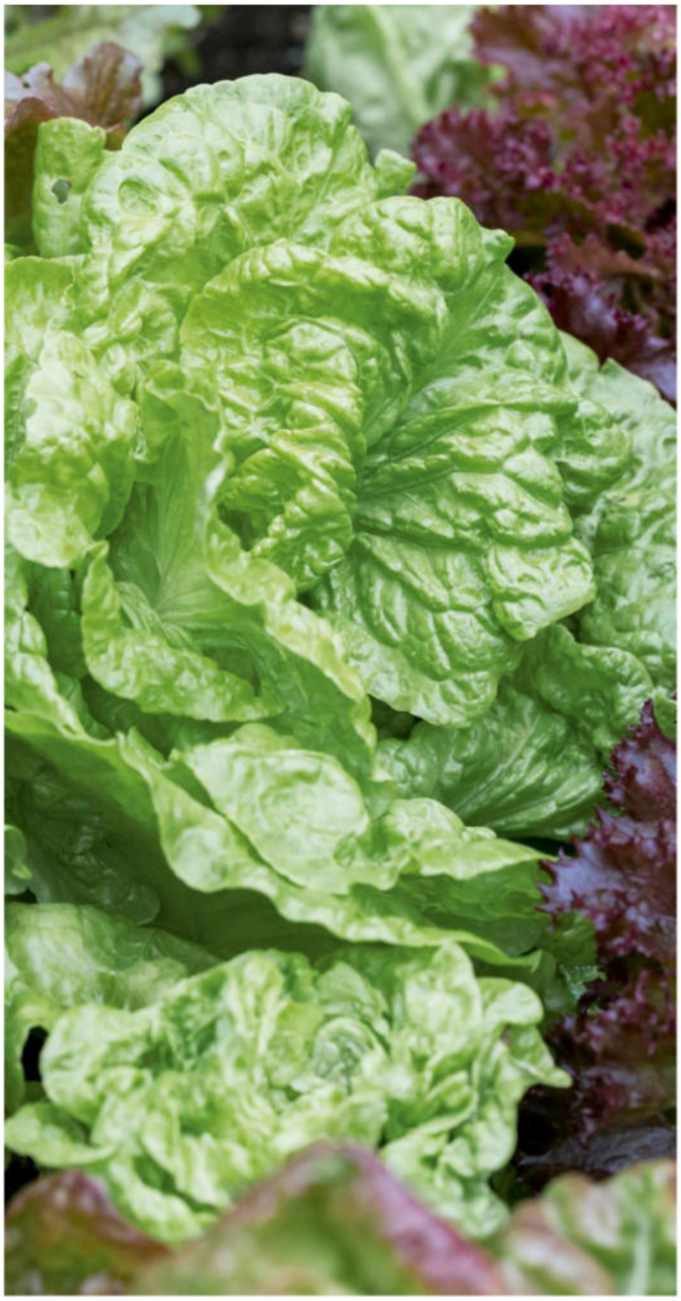
'Brighton'

Produced a dense head, but the lower leaves rotted quickly and were then prone to slugs. Not suitable as a cut-and-come-again crop, so it provides just one harvest. This variety is recommended for winter and early-spring growing, however, so don't rule it out for that season.

Salad leaves are quick and easy to grow, and there are plenty of varieties that you can start sowing now







◀ ‘Merveille des Quatre Saisons’

I’ve grown this variety for around 10 years. Its leaves are gorgeous – deep red with bright green hearts – and taste as good as they look. The texture is perfectly balanced: soft but with sufficient bite. It can be picked as individual leaves or a whole head, and is prolific and very bolt resistant.

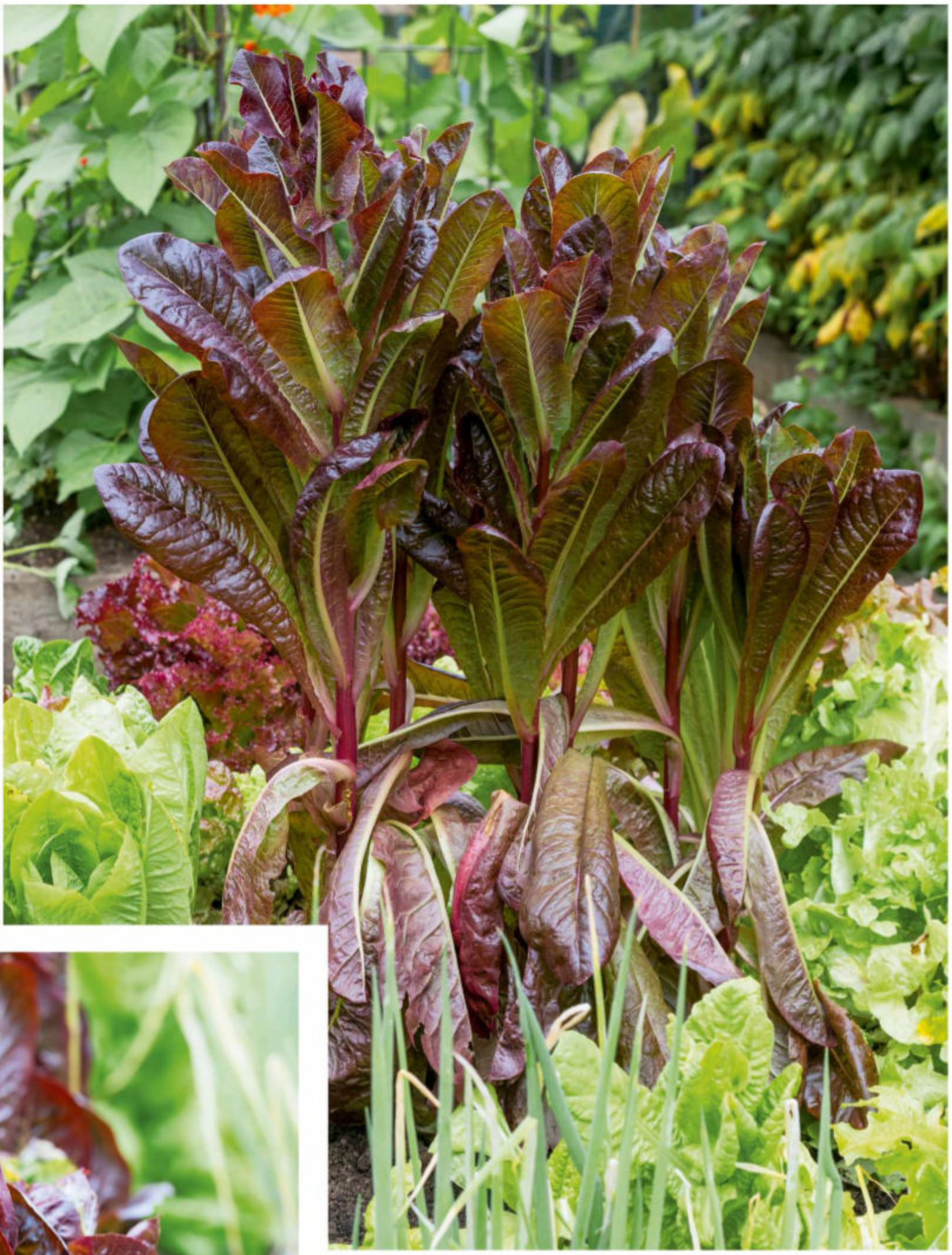
▲ ‘Tom Thumb’

A wonderfully neat, compact butterhead lettuce – ideal for smaller gardens and containers. It has a very pleasing, strong mid-green colour that adds vibrancy to salads, and the flavour is mild – ideal if you don’t like lettuce too peppery. Each head is tightly packed, giving plenty of leaves.

Cos

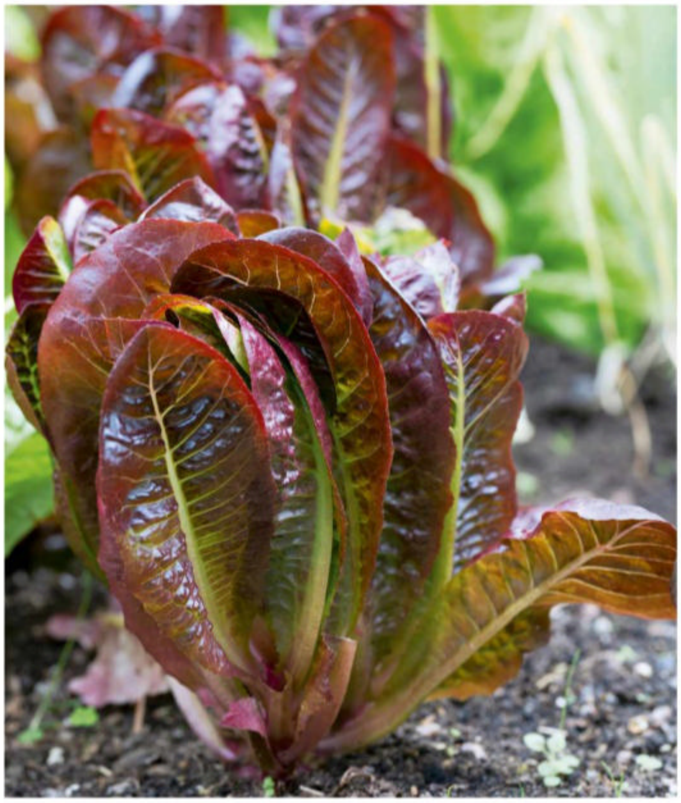
▶ ‘Amaze’

So pretty it would work well in an ornamental border! Forms neat, upright, statuesque heads with burgundy tops and green hearts. Best cut as soon as the heads are formed as they bolted quicker than anything else I trialled (as shown here). Good flavour, which combined with its good looks makes it worth growing.



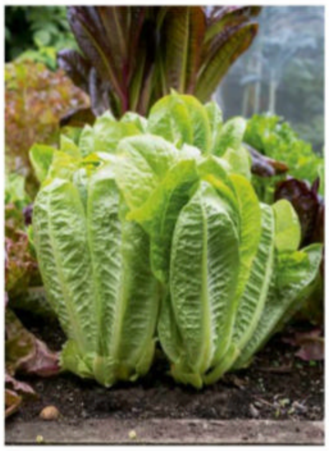
▼ ‘Moonred’

My top recommendation for a cos lettuce, this is proof that great things come in small packages! Very petite, yet masses of deep burgundy leaves packed into each head that can be picked as cut-and-come-again leaves or whole heads. Delicious yet gentle flavour – a superb addition to any salad.



▶ ‘Romaine Ballon’

Produces good-sized pale-green crispy heads reminiscent of an iceberg lettuce, but in the traditional rugby-ball shape of a cos. It was very easy and quick to grow, but lacked any flavour. Useful for bulking out salads, but perhaps not one for foodies looking for interesting colour or flavour.



PHOTOS: NEIL HEPWORTH; JASON INGRAM

Oakleaf

◀ 'Oakleaf'

Although the leaves are nothing exciting to look at, this variety has a good strong flavour without being bitter. The leaves were slightly thicker than other varieties, which added a nice bite to salads. It performed very well as a cut-and-come-again crop, so is useful if you prefer smaller harvests.

BEST OVERALL

▲ 'Lollo Rossa'

This variety has it all – beautiful, delicious, very long harvesting window and it refused to bolt all season. The leaves are white at the base, moving through lime green and topped with mahogany frills. The highly textured leaves hold salad dressing particularly well. A new favourite that I'll now be growing every year!

◀ 'Kyrio'

The plain green leaves are curved and textured, ideal for holding plenty of salad dressing – which is needed, as this variety lacks flavour. It was prolific, showed good resistance to bolting and was equally good whether harvested as a cut-and-come-again crop or as whole heads.

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Baby-leaf salad mixes

These mixes are quick, cheap and have a long sowing window. They can add plenty of variety to your salads and, as cut-and-come-again crops, they're great for windowsill gardeners. Our trial's four mixes performed well and had high germination rates.

◀ 'Mesclun Mixed'

A good range of colours, with less variation in leaf shape – although a good one if you don't like the spikier foliage in some mixes. It has a nice gentle flavour, making it a good base for a wide range of salads, and it cropped prolifically.

▲ 'Red & Green Salad Bowl Mix'

This was the quickest and most reliable to grow throughout the summer. Lovely colours, from pale green to mid-red, but all the leaves are the same shape. Sadly there was virtually no flavour, but extremely easy and prolific, so useful as a neutral base for salads for new growers.

BEST FOR FLAVOUR

▼ 'Elegance Mixed Leaves'

Highly decorative, with a range of colours and leaf shapes, from gently rounded to highly serrated. It's very peppery – almost like horseradish – so I found it best mixed 50:50 with a plainer variety when eating. Harvest regularly to enjoy as baby leaves, as it's very fast growing.

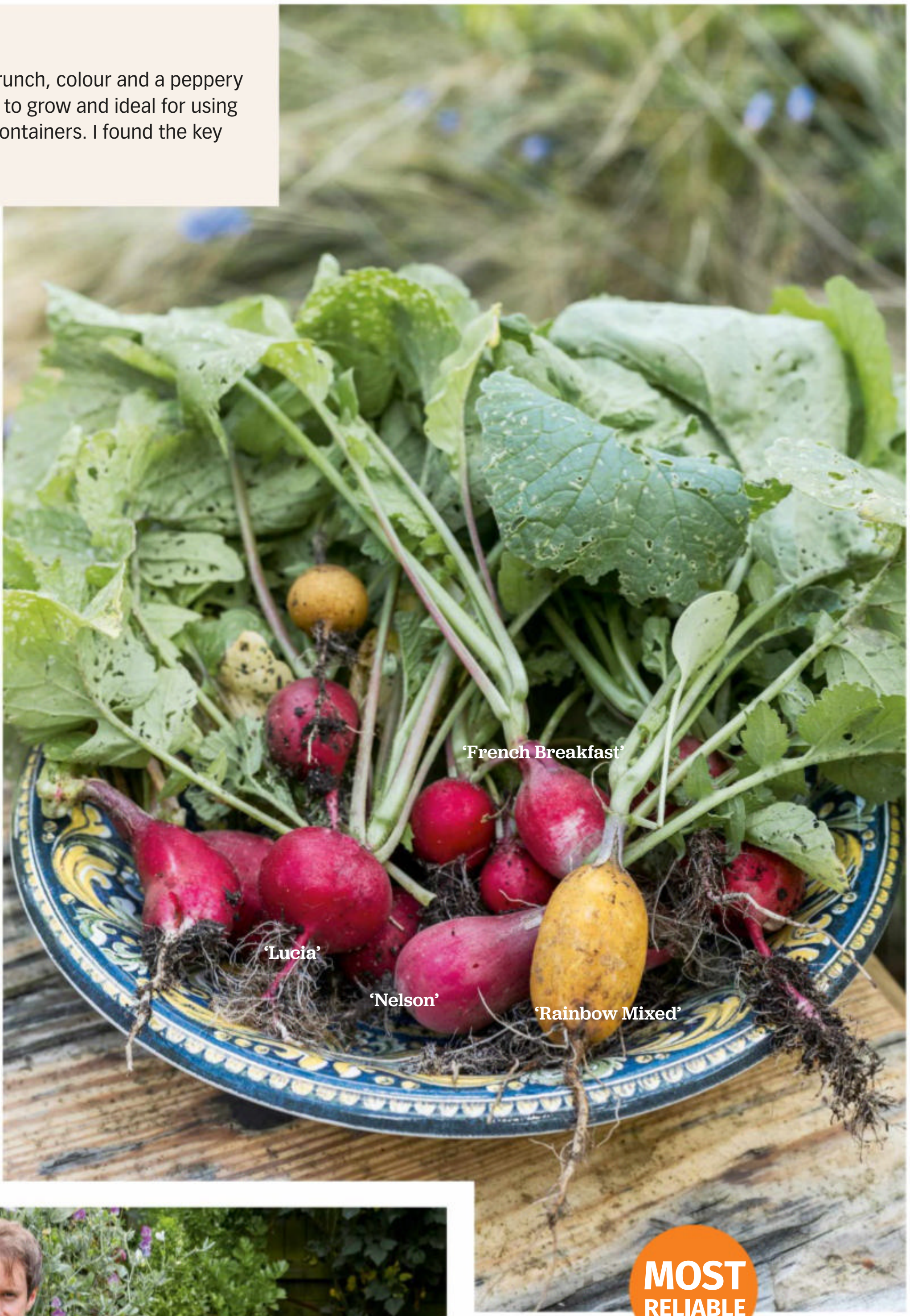
▲ 'Oriental Mixed'

This was my favourite from the trial, as it was absolutely delicious. A wide diversity of leaf shapes – although lacking in colour interest – provided tasty mouthfuls without it being too peppery. Less vigorous, but stayed at baby-leaf size the longest.

PHOTOS: NEIL HEPWORTH

Radishes

Radishes are a great way to add crunch, colour and a peppery kick to salads. They're really quick to grow and ideal for using up narrow spaces in beds and in containers. I found the key was to harvest them young.



▶ 'Lucia'

While all varieties were quick to germinate, this was the quickest to reach harvesting size. It produces the archetypal radish: uniform red spheres with a tuft of green foliage. Crunchy, with great flavour, and what they lack in visual interest, they make up for in taste.

▶ 'Rainbow Mixed'

As the name suggests, this gives a vibrant range of colours that liven up any salad bowl, with shades of red, white, yellow and purple. Only around a third of the seeds germinated at each sowing, and the various colours grew at different rates, so sow extra for a decent harvest at any one point.

▶ 'Nelson'

An unusual shape, they produce long cylindrical radishes that are bright red with white bases. Their shape makes them ideal for adding small, consistent slices of crunch to salads. Their taste was mild for a radish, but delicious nonetheless. Slower growing than the others, but only by a few days.

MOST RELIABLE

▲ 'French Breakfast 3'

This variety had a near perfect germination rate, which was significantly higher than the other varieties. Produces oval radishes of scarlet red, fading to white at their bases. The crops were consistent in size, shape and quality, and had a strong flavour.

Harvest radishes after only three or four weeks, when small and tender

PHOTOS: NEIL HEPWORTH

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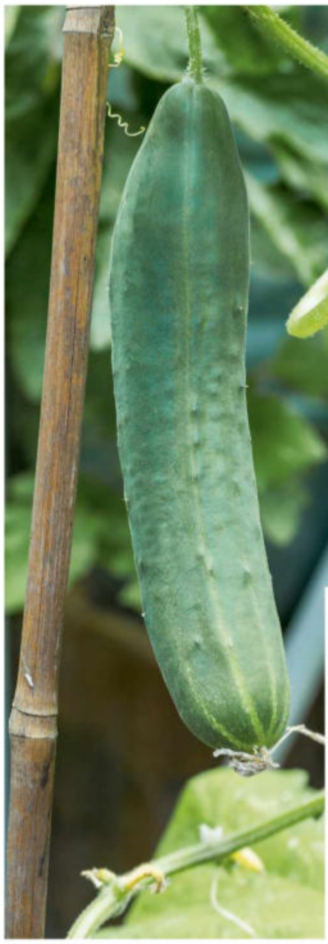
Cucumbers

Cucumbers are great for adding crunch to salads and making perfect crudités. I trialled these in large pots in an unheated greenhouse, using F1 varieties that all germinated well. While similar in colour and taste, they all grew rather differently.



▲ 'Swing'

This variety is suitable for outdoor growing, and although the fruits had spines, they were easy to brush off. Chunky and 20-25cm long, the cucumbers had a slightly thicker skin and were wonderfully crunchy. They were more solid than other varieties, making them ideal for grating and making tzatziki.

▲ 'Bella'

This variety grew the largest, both in terms of overall plant and fruit. The cucumbers were very long (around 40cm) and quite thin, and each plant only yielded around five fruits each. Therefore this variety is ideal for growers who just want one large cucumber a week.

▶ 'Nimrod'

This was by far my favourite. It was extremely prolific, each plant producing up to 30 fruits each! The cucumbers were stocky, about 15cm long, with a new fruit ready to harvest every three or four days. They were crisp with a thin skin and quite a high moisture content.

BIGGEST
YIELD

Beetroots

I grow beetroots every year, as they fill small gaps in the vegetable patch, and in the trial they all grew without fuss. They're wonderfully versatile – grated raw into a slaw or cooked and added to salads for colour and earthy flavour.

BEST FOR
COLOUR

▼ 'Chioggia'

This variety is famous for its vivid pink and white flesh in a bullseye or stripes, depending on which way you cut it. The flattened balls of tender flesh worked as a good all-round beetroot – whether raw or cooked. The stems are also bright pink, providing extra visual interest.

▲ 'Boldor'

With copper skin and golden flesh, this variety was the most attractive. They're boxy in shape, which makes them easier to peel and chop, and when cooked were the sweetest in flavour. The foliage is quite bland to look at, but the vibrant roots make up for it.

▼ 'Pablo'

This globe-shaped beetroot has deep purple flesh, and while it looks like beetroot you'd buy from a supermarket, its flavour and texture are far superior. The crisp flesh makes it ideal for grating raw, and it cooks beautifully too. The stems are deep purple, adding beauty to the veg patch.

PHOTOS: NEIL HEPWORTH

Spring onions

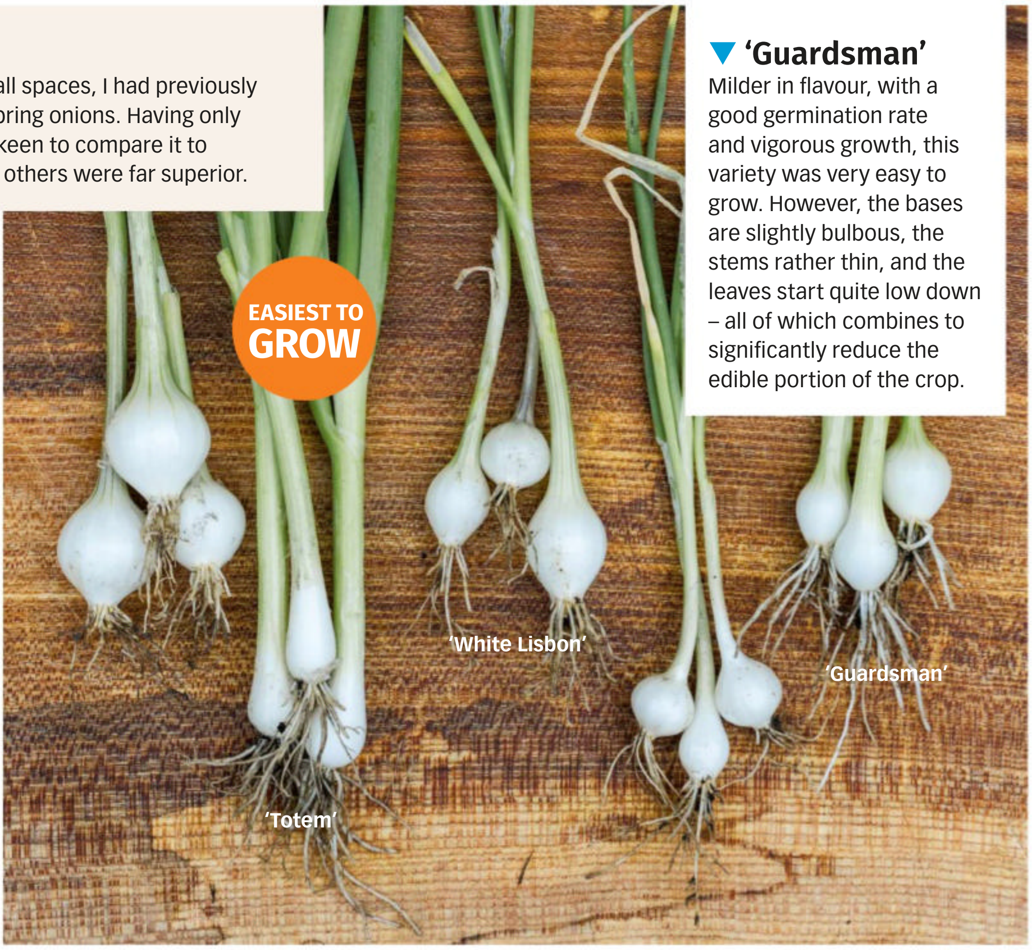
Although ideal for growing in small spaces, I had previously struggled to get a good crop of spring onions. Having only ever grown 'White Lisbon', I was keen to compare it to different varieties, and found the others were far superior.

▶ 'Totem'

This was hands down the best variety in the trial. It had the best germination rate and produced uniformly straight spring onions of pencil thickness, with plenty of stem before the leaves fork, giving maximum edible parts per harvest. They have a strong flavour and wonderful crunch.

▶ 'White Lisbon'

I was surprised how consistently poor the germination rate was (even trying different brands of seeds), considering how well known this variety is. The spring onions that did grow were very bulbous, which I find less useful than straighter varieties, but they did have good flavour.



▼ 'Guardsman'

Milder in flavour, with a good germination rate and vigorous growth, this variety was very easy to grow. However, the bases are slightly bulbous, the stems rather thin, and the leaves start quite low down – all of which combines to significantly reduce the edible portion of the crop.

Salad-growing tips

The key with sowing seeds is to only sow what you need. Over-sowing can lead to overcrowding and damping-off disease, and is a waste of seeds and money. Sow thinly – individually where you can – and the resulting seedlings will have more space to thrive. Keep the soil moist but not soaked, and give them plenty of light and warmth.

I trialled sowing most varieties both directly into the soil and starting off in modules before transplanting. I found that baby-leaf salad mixes and spring onions are much better sown direct, and on the whole so are radishes. Cucumbers are definitely one to sow in pots first until they're a good size, while lettuces and beetroots worked equally well either way.

Sowing direct saves time, as thinning out is quicker than transplanting, and it also means less watering, as beds dry out slower than plastic trays. The downside is the crops take up ground space for the whole time they're growing, so starting them off in modules means that you can have crops ready to transplant as soon as others are harvested, maximising space. Modules are also easier to protect earlier in the season if you have a greenhouse or coldframe, although cloches and fleece can be used to bring on direct sowings.

When raising seedlings in modules or pots, check the drainage holes in the base once they have several leaves. If you see roots poking out, it's time to pot on or transplant outside.

Transplant indoor-sown seedlings after hardening them off outdoors

NEXT MONTH Discover expert growing advice for your salad crops, plus tips on quick and tasty pea shoots

The art of crops in pots

PART TWO

Get the most out of a small space by growing edibles that also work as colourful ornamentals. **Lucy Bellamy** shares her inspiring containers for the summer

As summer approaches, our thoughts turn to eating outside, making the most of longer days and warm weather. Even in a small space, it's easy to grow delicious things to eat and, where space is limited, there's no reason why your edibles can't do double duty and look as good as they taste. Containers are perfect for this, giving you the freedom to experiment with combinations of plants in different colours, textures and heights.

Imagine the dusky blue of ripe blueberries matched with the bright-blue flowers of rosemary or the red flecks on a 'Freckles' lettuce leaf paired with ruby-red chicory 'Rossa Di Treviso'. If you've already started experimenting with colour-themed containers after part one of this series, you'll have some pots on the go, but it's not too late to start now. Either way, the crops you pot up this month will give you plenty to pick later in the summer.

One joy of creating vibrant, colourful containers is how flexible it is. You can either use my tried-and-tested ideas as they are, or as inspiration to create your own from scratch. Whichever you choose, it's fun and incredibly rewarding to make a garden that is both beautiful and delicious. Make sure everything you include is edible, such as any flowers, so that there's no chance of eating something you shouldn't.

PHOTO: JASON INGRAM

The hot shades of a red pepper and the peachy dahlia 'Sarah Raven' make a striking display

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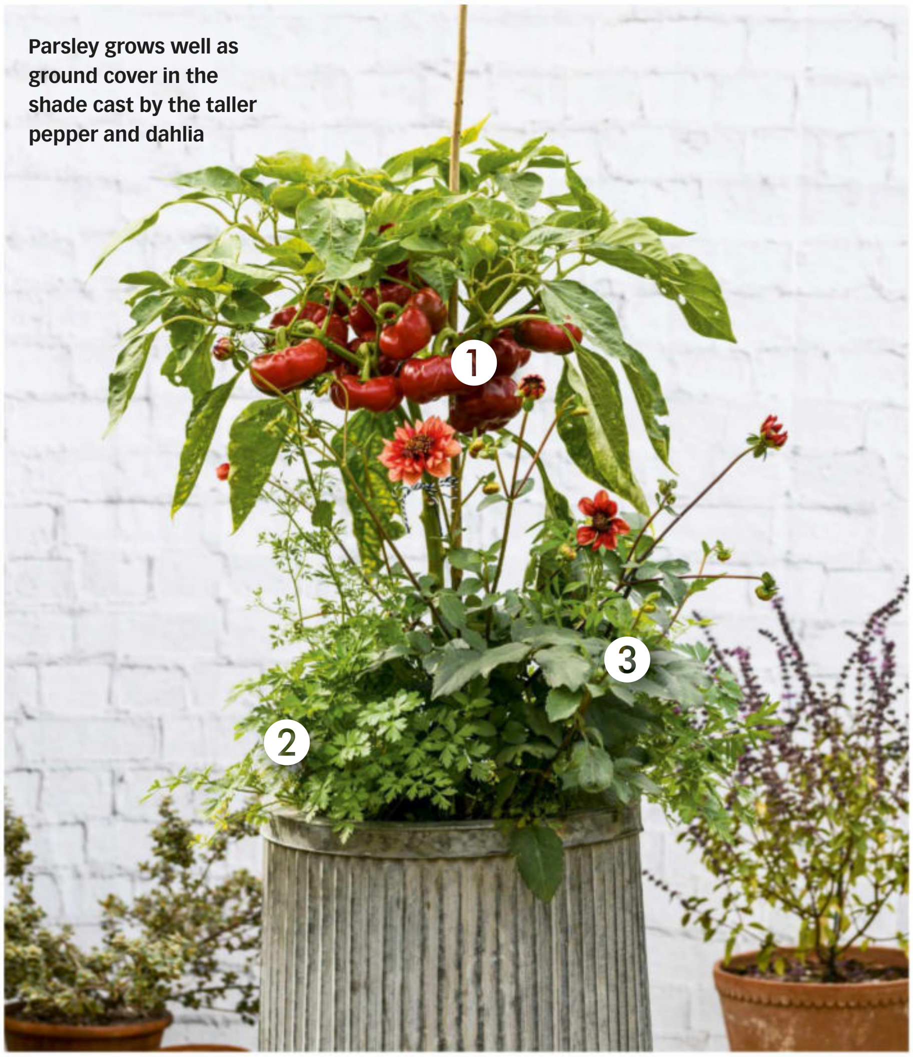


Parsley grows well as ground cover in the shade cast by the taller pepper and dahlia

Red and peachy

This vibrant container is packed full of colour with the bright red of the peppers echoed in the rich, peachy blooms of dahlia 'Sarah Raven', offset by the bright green of the parsley. Peppers are easily grown from seed in early to mid-spring – sow two seeds in a 9cm pot of seed compost, removing the weaker one if they both germinate – or you can start with a young plant later in the season. Pot on the plant, moving it into the final container only once it's big enough to compete with the size of the growing dahlia.

Keep the container in a sheltered, sunny spot, watering daily during hot weather. Feed the container once a week using a dilute liquid tomato feed. Use a cane to support the stems of the pepper. Pick the peppers when they're red and shiny, and pick or deadhead the dahlia regularly to encourage more blooms.

WE USED

① **Sweet pepper (*Capsicum* 'Topepo Rosso'**

② **French parsley (*Petroselinum crispum* 'French'**

③ **Dahlia 'Sarah Raven'**

Red, purple and green

Kohlrabi can be grown in tubs and I like the way this zinc container picks up on their colour tones and waxy bloom. Using a large pot that has drainage holes, fill it almost to the lip with multi-purpose compost. Sow four to six kohlrabi seeds, spacing them 15cm apart, and water in. Once the seedlings have their first true leaves, snuggle lettuce and chicory plug plants in between them. Stand the tub in a sunny spot and cover the plants with fine netting to prevent cabbage white butterflies landing on the leaves.

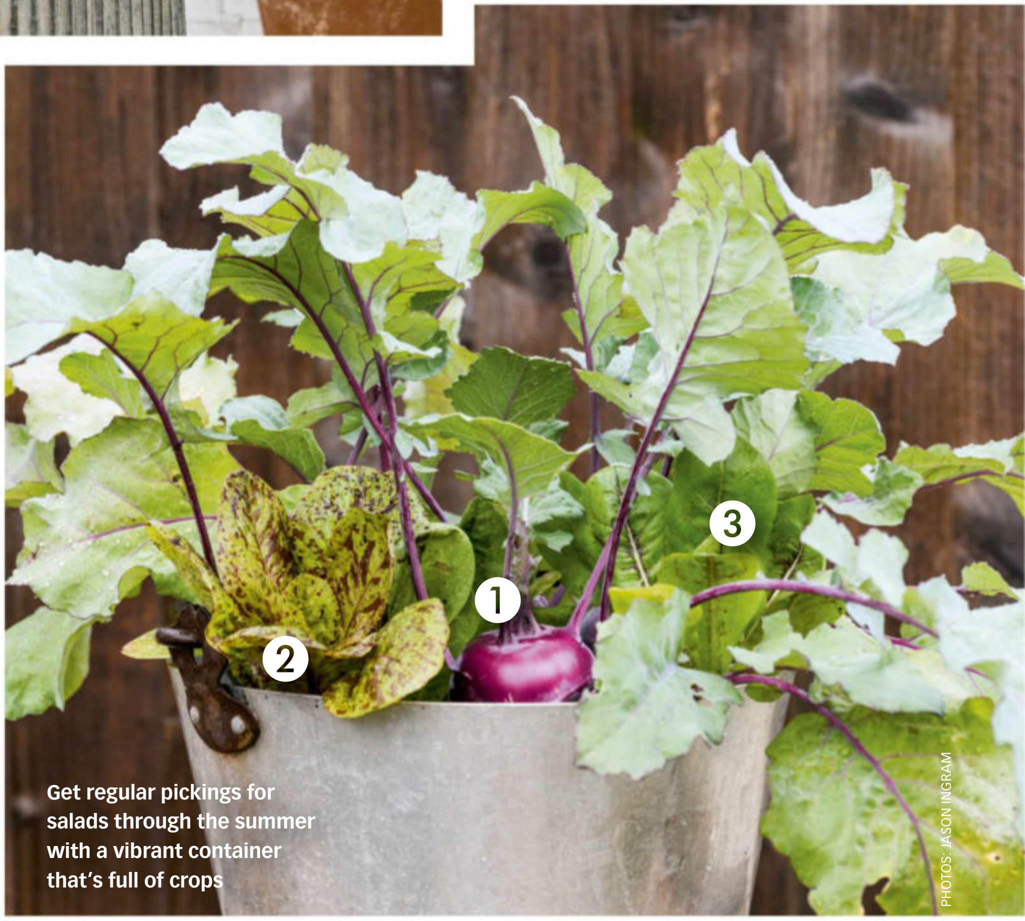
Water regularly and feed plants weekly using a dilute liquid tomato feed. Use the lettuce and chicory for salads, taking a few leaves from the base as you need them, rather than harvesting the whole plant. For the best flavour, pick kohlrabi when the swollen stems are no bigger than 5cm wide.

WE USED

① **Kohlrabi 'Kolibri' F1**

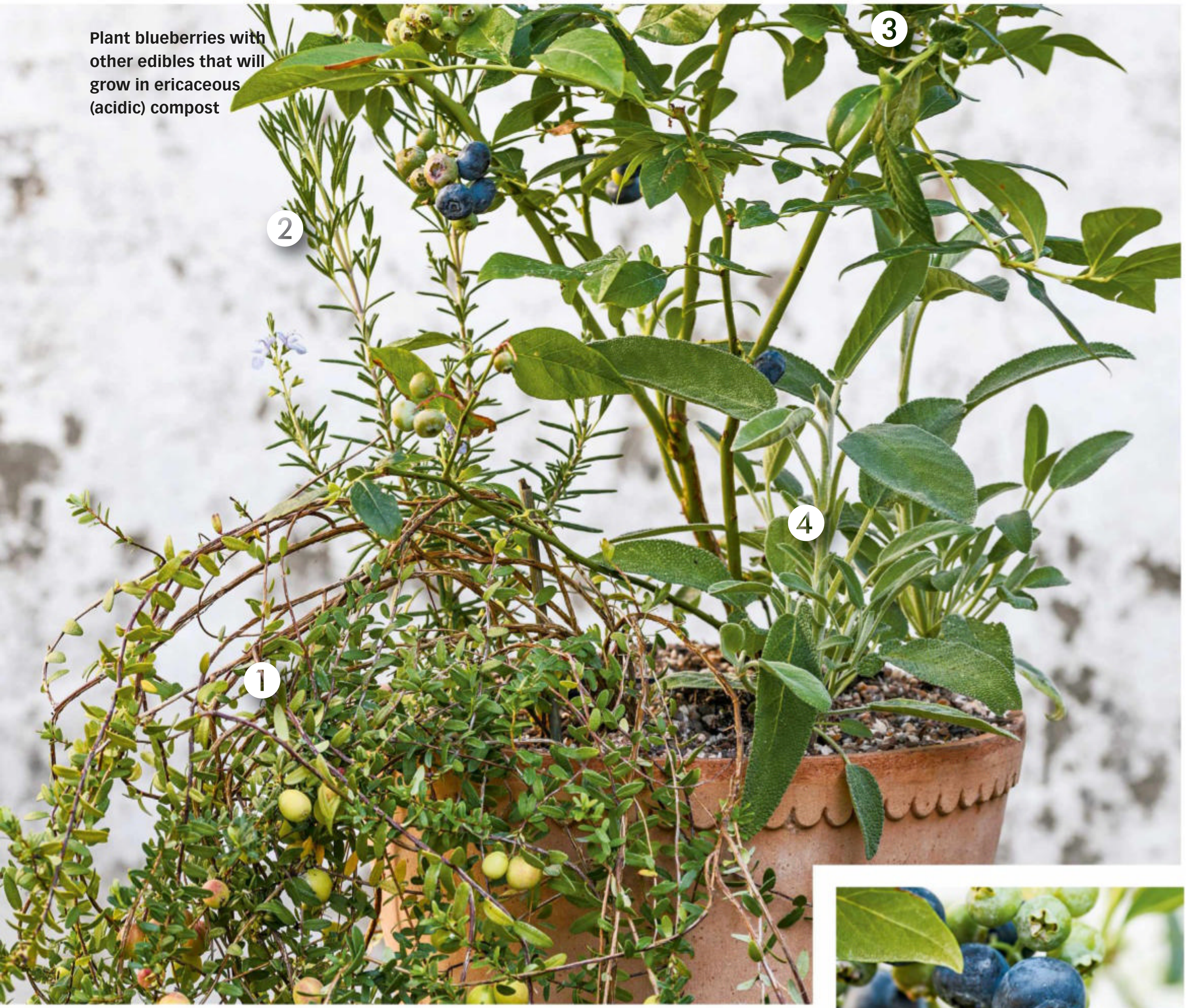
② **Lettuce 'Freckles'**

③ **Chicory 'Rossa Di Treviso' (as salad leaves)**



Get regular pickings for salads through the summer with a vibrant container that's full of crops

PHOTOS: JASON INGRAM



Plant blueberries with other edibles that will grow in ericaceous (acidic) compost

Pale blue and deep blue

One of the benefits of growing in containers is that you can give your plants exactly what they need, in terms of soil and sunshine, in the compost that you choose and where you stand the pot. Blueberries and cranberries need an acidic soil with a pH between 4 and 5.5, and it is easy to provide this in a container by using ericaceous compost.

In this pot, I've planted the fruit bushes with rosemary and sage, chosen partly for the colours of their flowers and foliage, and partly for their ability to grow in ericaceous compost.

You'll need to use rainwater rather than tap water to water this clay pot. Its porosity means moisture evaporates quicker so that the plants won't be sitting in wet compost. Stand the container in a sunny position and fill it almost to the rim with the ericaceous compost. Position the blueberry in the middle and add the cranberry so that it can trail over the rim. Add the aromatic herbs, rosemary and sage, into the gaps. Water thoroughly to settle them in. Once the plants start to grow, you will need to water regularly and feed the pot once a week using an ericaceous liquid feed.

WE USED

① **Cranberry 'Pilgrim' (*Vaccinium macrocarpon* 'Pilgrim')**
② **Rosemary 'Jekka's Blue' (*Salvia rosmarinus* 'Jekka's Blue')**
③ **Blueberry 'Elizabeth' (*Vaccinium corymbosum* 'Elizabeth')**
④ **Common sage (*Salvia officinalis*)**

PHOTOS: JASON INGRAM

Eat the rainbow

Growing your own is one of the best ways to incorporate fruit and veg into your diet, and colourful crops bring a wealth of extra benefits via the phytochemicals that help them stand out in your plot. The pigments that make blueberries blue (anthocyanins) are also powerful antioxidants, as is the beta carotene in red peppers, which the body turns into vitamin A. Something to think about when designing crops in pots.

BBC GARDENERS' WORLD EXCLUSIVE EVENT

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Alan Titchmarsh

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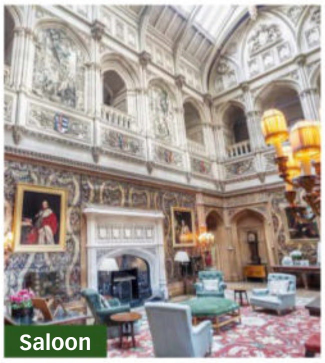
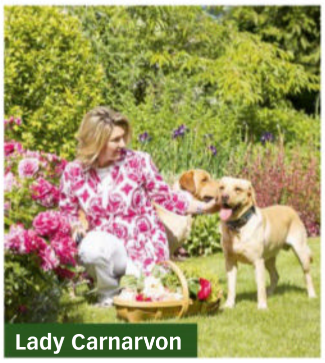

Saloon


Lady Carnarvon

***BBC Gardeners' World** Magazine* is thrilled to invite you to an exclusive event at Highclere Castle in Hampshire – one of England's most iconic stately homes and famous as the 'real' Downton Abbey. If you're a fan of this classic period drama and looking forward to the new film in September, this is your chance to immerse yourself in its glorious setting, in the company of Alan Titchmarsh and Lady Carnarvon.

Start your day with a warm greeting from the *GW Magazine* team, before the Countess of Carnarvon shares the fascinating history of her family home, revealing the secrets and heritage of Highclere Castle's stunning gardens. Joining her will be Alan Titchmarsh, who'll entertain you with tales from his illustrious career and give a captivating talk on 'Why we garden the way we do', after which there will be an interactive Q&A session. You will then explore this magnificent home on a guided tour of the state rooms, bedrooms and vistas that made this the perfect setting for *Downton Abbey*. You can also explore the Egyptian Exhibition. Enjoy a delicious light lunch to recharge for the afternoon, when you'll have free time to wander through the beautiful gardens and arboretum.

This event promises to be a magical experience, blending history, gardening and the charm of Highclere Castle, so don't miss out – book your tickets now.

YOUR ITINERARY

- **10.30am** Soak up the scenery on arrival at Highclere Castle, with a welcome from the *GW* team
- **10.45am** Take your seats in the Marquee
- **11am** Welcome from Lady Carnarvon, followed by a talk and Q&A with Alan
- **12 noon** Groups split: guided tour of the castle and Egyptian Exhibition or light lunch and refreshments in Coach House and Tea Rooms
- **1.30pm** Groups swap
- **3pm** Free time to enjoy the gardens and grounds, and explore the gift shop
- **4pm** Grounds close, guests depart with a goody bag

To book, visit:
GardenersWorld.com/GWhighclere25

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as places are limited

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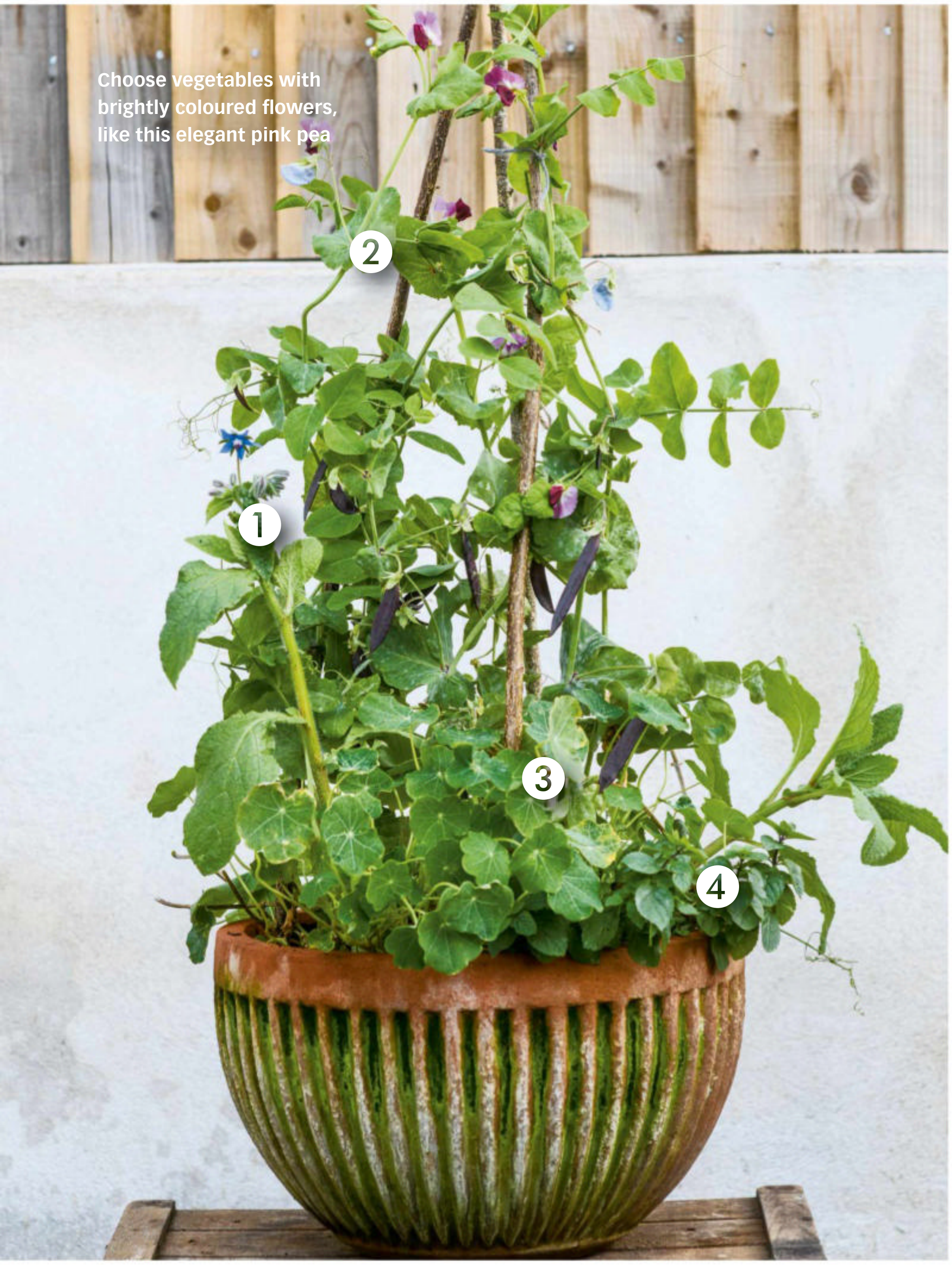


Choose vegetables with brightly coloured flowers, like this elegant pink pea

Pink and blue

Nasturtium 'Ladybird Rose', chosen for its pretty pink flowers, was the starting point for this pot. I've matched it with three plants that grow at a similar pace. The purple pods and flowers of pea 'Blauwschokker' repeat in the blue of the borage's flowers, tying the scheme together. Use a deep pot filled with multi-purpose compost to accommodate the peas' deep roots.

Fill it almost to the rim with compost and push six pea seeds in, down to a finger's depth. Cover the seeds with compost, and water in. It's a good idea to add twiggy sticks at this stage to support the plants as they grow. Add borage, nasturtium and red mint as small plants around the edge, spacing them like three corners of a triangle. Water thoroughly to settle them in and stand the container in a sunny position out of the wind. Water the pot regularly and feed once a week using a dilute liquid feed. Pick the pea pods regularly to encourage more crops and harvest the nasturtiums, borage and mint by pinching out their flowers or tips.

WE USED

① **Borage (*Borago officinalis*)**

② **Pea 'Blauwschokker'**
(*Pisum sativum* 'Blauwschokker')

③ **Nasturtium 'Ladybird Rose'**
(*Tropaeolum majus*)

④ **Tall red mint (*Mentha* x *smithiana*)**

PHOTOS: JASON INGRAM

Grow edible flowers

Borage flowers are edible, attractive and provide a feast for bees

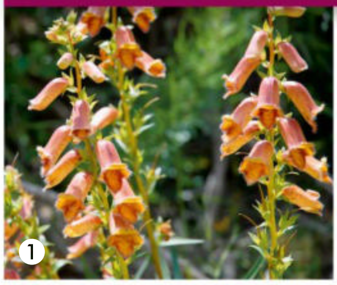
Edible flowers are an easy way to add colour to your garden as well as your kitchen. They bring a playful, ornamental feel to the veg patch but the real magic happens after you pick them. Scatter petals over your salads and puddings, or float a flower in a drink to instantly make it more special.

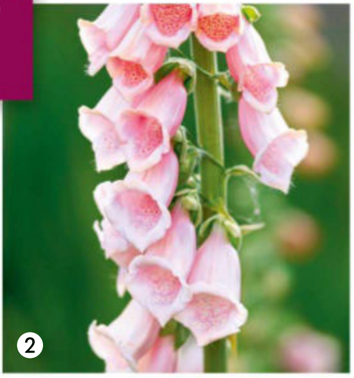
Dahlias are showstoppers in the garden, great in pots, and their petals are also edible. You can use them to add bright, slightly crunchy bursts of colour to summer plates. Violas and borage flowers, with their colourful, decorative petals, are perfect for topping cakes or bowls of ice cream, or freezing in ice cubes. Nasturtiums, with their bold, peppery flowers, are brilliant for adding flavour as well as colour to a plate of salad leaves.

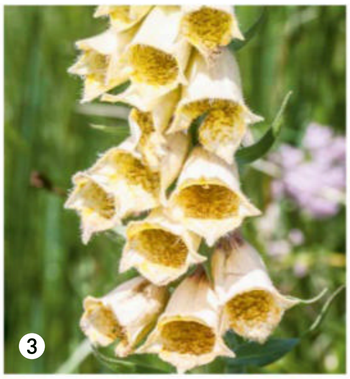
And one of the best things about edible flowers is that they are easy to grow and keep producing more blooms with regular picking.

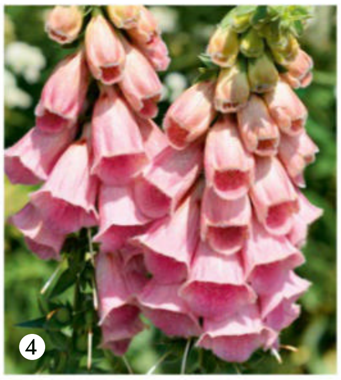
Vegetable pea flowers are edible, but do not eat sweet pea flowers

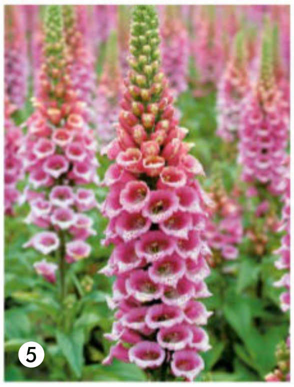
Gardeners' World offer

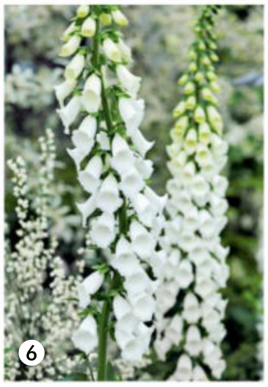


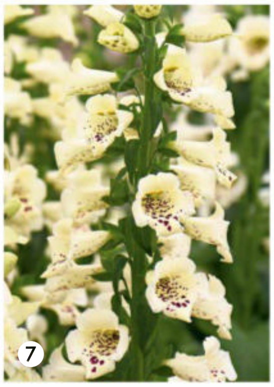


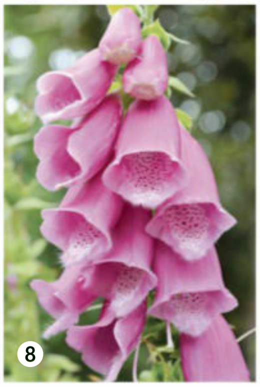


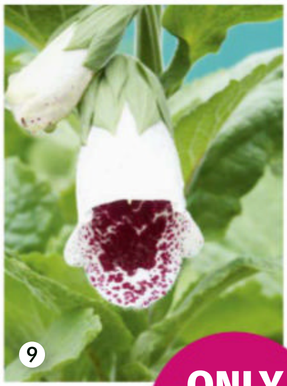












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CRAFT BREWED
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Pickled to perfection

Quick-pickling season is upon us, and Sarson's craft-brewed vinegar is ideal for preserving your garden's summer fruit and veg

Harvesting your own home-grown produce is one of the greatest joys of gardening. But if you get a glut of a particular fruit or vegetable that leaves you with too much to eat at once, pickling is one of the simplest ways to preserve it. Plus, it works with almost anything – from beetroots, onions and carrots to cabbages, cucumbers and courgettes.

Of course, vinegar is one of the most essential ingredients for pickling, and that's where Sarson's comes in. As the UK's leading malt vinegar brand, it's been skilfully brewing vinegar the proper way since 1794. But what makes it so special?

Brewed for food

More than 230 years ago, Thomas Sarson brewed the first batch of Sarson's malt vinegar on Craven Street in London. It was originally used for preserving food but soon became a staple condiment for splashing over fish and chips, as the tangy taste was the perfect accompaniment to the nation's favourite dish.

Since then, while the world has been constantly changing, Sarson's vinegar has stayed much the same. It's still made from scratch by master brewers, using quality British ingredients, including malted barley. And it's still matured in wooden vats for seven times longer than most vinegars, giving it that rich, rounded flavour that many of us know and love.

If you want to try quick-pickling with Sarson's this summer, this simple recipe is a great place to start. Ideal for picnics and barbecues alike, it's an easy way to transform your fresh cucumbers into a delicious seasonal side dish.

Sarson's pickled cucumber

SERVES 2 PREP 15 mins EASY

1 cucumber, thinly sliced
1 large red onion, thinly sliced
small handful of fresh dill,
  finely chopped
small handful of fresh parsley,
  finely chopped
½ tbsp sugar
½ tsp salt
150ml Sarson's Malt Vinegar
½ chilli, finely diced (optional)

1 Add all the ingredients to a large sterilised jar, put the lid on and shake well.

2 Serve on a platter and enjoy with crusty bread and your favourite deli meats and cheeses.

MAKE IT YOUR OWN

Don't have the right ingredients? You can swap the cucumber for another crunchy seasonal fruit or vegetable, such as pepper or radish, and the dill and parsley for any other soft garden herbs, such as coriander or basil. So, don't be afraid to experiment with whatever you've got growing at home.

SARSON'S

For more pickling inspiration, visit sarsons.co.uk/recipes/categories/pickling

Growing the good life

With veg beds full of seedlings and young plants, plus lots of crops ready to harvest, **Sara Ward** is as busy as her bees this month

A gentle stroll round the garden in June allows you to marvel at our precious pollinators as they meticulously work each flower, gathering sweet nectar for energy and colourful, protein-packed pollen. While the bees take all they need, nature rewards us with very real fruit from their labours through the magic of pollination. As the bees bumble around inside all the blossoms, we can be confident that developing berries won't be far behind.

There's a saying among beekeepers: 'a swarm in May is worth a load of hay, a swarm in June is worth a silver spoon, but a swarm in July is not worth a fly'. So I'll be checking my bees regularly to try and prevent them swarming and will be on hand for the local community, as ever, if anyone finds a new family of honeybees taking up residence in their garden. As we celebrate the longest day of the year, nature makes the most of the sunshine and we keep up by gathering in crops as they ripen.

Getting a good start

At last our beds are full and although the veg plants are still small, regular watering and summer sun will encourage them to spread their roots wide and send their shoots high. I'm always aware that there are still multiple risks and that our young plants need protection from slugs and snails, cats and mice, and birds big and small – a large hen can tear up a young cauliflower with a single scratch of her claw. Then there's small children, urban foxes and that's before we factor in the weather, be that too wet or too dry. I try to mitigate all this by sowing far more than I need, knowing that I can always thin out seedlings and give away any spare plants.

Most of the raised beds in the home garden are covered with arches of netting that protect crops from pigeons and butterflies, therefore no caterpillars! But the holes are big enough to let honey bees in for pollination, making this perfect for growing dwarf beans and peas. As soon as the early flowers open, bees will find them and it's not long before we're picking pods.

A hive of activity

There are so many everyday phrases that refer to honey bees – making a bee line, ask the hive mind, busy as a bee – and there's a lot of truth in them. Bees are remarkable creatures that pre-date humans by millions of

Sarah inspects her hives regularly to check the colonies' health and size, and try to prevent any swarming

> “With their excellent work ethic, **bees** make more **honey** than they need, allowing extra for us”

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> *I've now got a mix of strawberry plants on my allotment and look for ripening fruit on every visit*

years. There are 20,000 species of bee around the world, but it's just one, the honey bee, *Apis mellifera* (*apis* is Latin for bee and *mellifera* means honey-bearing), that live in large colonies. Their clear social structure, with a role for each member, combined with an excellent work ethic, means they make more honey than they need, allowing extra for us.

Bees need flowers, and flowers need bees, which makes them perfect partners for any garden. And even if you haven't considered managing your own apiary, bees typically have a 1-2 mile flight radius, so if there's a hive within range, then the bees are sure to find your plot.

When I work with children, we often have a bit of fun discussing what is a fruit and what is a vegetable, and while they'll often think of vegetables for dinner and fruit for dessert, I suggest that we eat vegetables before the plant is pollinated – think broccoli, onions and rhubarb – and fruit is picked after pollination, such as apples, tomatoes and strawberries. Even if we don't need pollinators for our harvest, we certainly need them to help plants produce seeds for future crops.

Sunset dessert

Down on the allotment, I've got four beds of strawberries, initially planted to harvest over several months, but some varieties were stronger than others and some beds were more shaded, so I've now got a mix of plants and simply look for ripening fruit on every visit. Unlike most other berries, which grow on tall canes or branches, strawberries are low growing and it's the age-old tradition of laying straw beneath the developing fruits, to lift them off the damp ground, that gives them their name.

With the early potatoes and broad beans ready to harvest, and a camping stove in my shed, you might find me popping down to the plot one evening with some eggs and a bottle of wine to enjoy a riverside supper, with strawberries for dessert of course!

ABOVE Spread straw around strawberries as a mulch and to lift the fruit off damp soil **BELOW** Pick sugar snap peas every few days, when they're young, crisp and sweet

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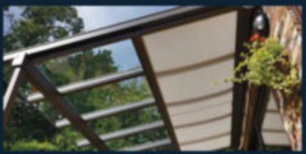

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June jobs

✔ **Use** any spare growing space for successional sowings of fast-growing radishes. I like 'Rainbow Mix', as you get a lucky-dip surprise when harvesting them for salads or roasting as a BBQ side dish.

✔ **Keep picking broad beans** – give the pods a gentle squeeze to get an idea of how big the beans are inside. Don't forget that they're well padded and the larger pods will have the biggest beans.

✔ **Harvest sugar snap peas** before they get too big. They're always a delight – my children used to pick them before school and stash them in their lunch boxes. You can also serve them in salads and stirfrys or simply steamed.

✔ **Snip off ripe redcurrants**. While my chickens will peck at any within jumping height, the higher fruit is all mine. These tangy currants make a glamorous garnish for desserts, a great sprinkling on fruit salad, and being rich in pectin are ideal for making jelly to accompany BBQs, store to enjoy with winter roasts or simply spread on toast.

ABOVE Sow radishes between slower-growing crops, to make best use of space **LEFT** Snip whole bunches of ripe currants, then remove the stalks in the kitchen

✔ **Lay a mulch** of straw under strawberries to reduce water evaporation from the soil, deter weeds and lift the fruits into the light for even ripening. As mature plants start to send out runners, help the young plantlets find some bare soil to root into and secure the stem in place with a small stone.

✔ **Pick salads**, either as mixed leaves from different varieties or when large enough for the whole head. You'll never find it fresher – just give it a gentle rinse and shake dry.

Strawberry jam

While it's hard to resist eating strawberries as I'm picking them, those that make it home are often served simply with cream. However, this really is the nicest homemade jam you can make, especially if you've grown your own berries. And it's delicious with homemade scones. Makes approximately 5 medium jars.

Ingredients

- 1kg strawberries, rinsed
- 1kg granulated sugar
- 2 lemons

Method

1 Remove the stalks from the strawberries, cut larger berries in half or quarters, and place in a large preserving pan.

2 Sprinkle over the sugar and juice from the lemons, reserving the lemon skins, pips and flesh.

3 Boil the reserved lemon pieces, in enough water to cover them, for 10 minutes.

4 Meanwhile, gently warm the strawberries, juice and sugar and bring to a simmer.

5 Strain the lemon water through a sieve into the strawberries, rubbing the pulp against the sieve with a wooden spoon – this is high in pectin to give the jam a good set.

6 Bring the jam to a high foaming boil and bubble rapidly for 10 minutes until setting point is reached (see below).

7 Leave the jam to stand in the pan for 15 minutes to cool a little and allow the berries to settle. Then pot into sterilised jars, seal and label them.

Setting point

For a good set jam that will hold its own on a scone, we need pectin to turn the juices into a jelly. The lemons in this recipe are naturally high in pectin and the sharp flavour helps to balance the sweetness from the strawberries and sugar.

These are the reminders that I use to make sure that my jam is cooked enough before potting it up:

1 Wait – until you have a high foaming boil
2 Watch – until the bubbles thicken and darken
3 Wobble – a drop of jam off a spoon
4 Wrinkle – a drop of jam on a cold saucer

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June

Growing guide

Sow an array of fast-growing salads, roots and tender crops direct outdoors into warm soil

Sow indoors 🟪 **Plant/sow outdoors** 🟩 **Harvest** 🟧

Key crops for June	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
 Beetroot Grow outside, rather than in a greenhouse, for optimum levels of liver-friendly compounds called betalains. **Tips** Sow small batches every two weeks for harvesting all summer. You can also pick the young leaves to add to salads. **Sow** ↓ 2cm deep **Final spacing** ↔ 10cm apart ↗ 25-30cm between rows			🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧		
 Borlotti beans Nutrient dense and a source of vegetable protein, beans are rich in polyphenols, which have anti-inflammatory properties. **Tips** Sow in small pots indoors or outdoors once the ground has warmed up. Enrich the soil by digging in lots of garden compost. **Sow** ↓ 5cm deep **Final spacing** ↔ 15cm apart ↗ 23cm between rows			🟪	🟪	🟩	🟩 🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧	
 Butternut squash These are rich in beta-carotene – the plant version of vitamin A – which helps to maintain skin elasticity. **Tips** Add organic matter before transplanting or sowing outside, as these hungry plants like rich soil, full sun and regular watering. **Sow** ↓ 3cm deep **Final spacing** ↔ 1.5m apart ↗ 1.5m between rows			🟪	🟪	🟩	🟩			🟧	🟧		
 Cauliflowers This brassica is a source of health-promoting phytochemicals, vitamin C, magnesium and potassium. **Tips** For a succession of delicious cauliflowers, sow small batches every few weeks. Water well, especially in summer. **Sow** ↓ 2cm deep **Final spacing** ↔ 15-60cm apart ↗ 15-60cm between rows				🟩	🟩	🟩			🟧	🟧	🟧	
 Chicory: radicchio/sugarloaf With gut-friendly fibre and beta-carotene, adding chicory to your plate helps to support your immune defences. **Tips** Avoid sowing in cold conditions, as plants are likely to bolt. For less bitter leaves, blanch the heads 12 weeks after sowing. **Sow** ↓ 1cm deep **Final spacing** ↔ 23-30cm apart ↗ 30cm between rows	🟧			🟪	🟩	🟩	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧
 Chives A source of bone-building calcium, magnesium and vitamin K, chives have a subtle flavour that fades after picking. **Tips** Regularly snip off the young leaves close to the ground. The mauve flowers are edible too – scatter them in salads. **Plant** ↓ at same level as in pot **Final spacing** ↔ 20cm apart ↗ 30cm between rows				🟩	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧			
 Gherkins Nutritious and hydrating, gherkins have more potassium and beta-carotene than other types of cucumber. **Tips** Sow indoors or into pre-warmed soil under cloches. Provide supports for plants to climb and don't remove male flowers. **Sow** ↓ 2.5cm deep **Final spacing** ↔ 15cm apart ↗ 60-70cm between rows				🟪	🟪	🟩	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧		
 Kohlrabi This late-season crop is a useful source of immune-supporting nutrients including vitamin C and protective phytonutrients. **Tips** Grow in full sun, in rich, free-draining soil. For the best flavour, harvest when they're the size of golf balls. **Sow** ↓ 2cm deep **Final spacing** ↔ 23cm apart ↗ 30cm between rows		🟪	🟪 🟩	🟩	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧	
 Pak choi Contains useful compounds such as quercetin and kaempferol, as well as the skin-friendly mineral zinc. **Tips** Sow now, as plants are less likely to bolt than those sown in spring. Grow in fertile soil and keep plants well watered. **Sow** ↓ 2cm deep **Final spacing** ↔ 10cm apart ↗ 45cm between rows			🟪	🟩	🟩	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧	
 Radishes Like many other brassicas, these crunchy, tangy roots contain compounds with cancer-protective properties. **Tips** Sow small batches fortnightly to avoid gluts. Pick as soon as big enough. Keep cool and water well to prevent bolting in hot weather. **Sow** ↓ 1cm deep **Final spacing** ↔ 1cm apart ↗ 15cm between rows			🟩	🟩	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟩 🟧	🟧		

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Gardeners' Question Time

Our experts tackle your queries, offering pomegranate-growing tips, aphid advice, recommended roses and a bug-hotel cleaning regime

Pippa Greenwood
One of the top experts on pests and diseases, Pippa gardens using organic methods.

Matt Biggs
Matt trained at Kew and has been gardening professionally for more than 30 years.

Matthew Pottage
Matthew is Head of Horticulture and Landscape Strategy at The Royal Parks.

Q Which plants do well in sunny borders and how should we arrange them?

Ian and Sally, Bristol

A MATT B SAYS Plant tulips and daffodils for spring colour. Hardy geraniums are always reliable, particularly Rozanne with bright violet-blue flowers from early summer to autumn.

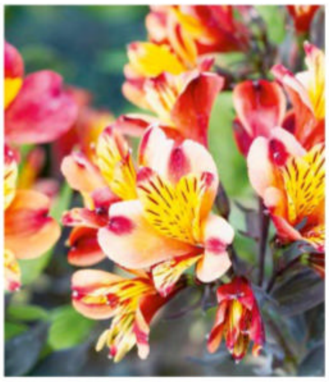
Phlox will add both colour and fragrance, but do dig in plenty of organic matter as they dislike dry soil. Try pale lilac 'Prospero' and bright pink 'Becky Towe'.

Shrub roses will flourish too, including Macmillan Nurse, with blush-white double blooms from summer to autumn, and bright yellow 'Ambassador Nogami' for contrast.

Do find room for campanulas, including the glorious 'Kent Belle', up to 1.2m tall with large, deep-violet bells, and 'Pritchard's Variety', with rounded clusters of smaller, violet-blue blooms.

Q&A TEAM ANSWER
Sunny borders

Campanula 'Pritchard's Variety' blooms from June to September



Alstroemeria Indian Summer brings exotic drama to borders

A MATT P SAYS It sounds like you'll be spoilt for choice with such good light levels. For great flower power, I'm a big fan of *Alstroemeria* Indian Summer as it blooms for such a long time, as does *Geranium* Rozanne. Add some flowering shrubs too, such as hibiscus and compact repeat-flowering roses, such as For Your Eyes Only and Eyes For You.

When deciding what to plant where in a border, the biggest lesson to learn is to plant in groups and repeat them along the border so it has a cohesive look. You may wish to consider warmer and cooler colours and their placement, but there are no hard-and-fast rules with colours – you should do whatever excites you.

Finally, an ornamental grass woven through the border will bring movement and soften the rigid bones of the shrubs – one of my favourites is *Calamagrostis × acutiflora* 'Overdam'.

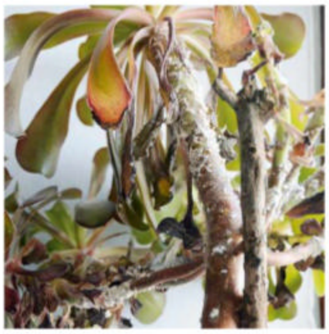
Q Does my aeonium have mealybugs?

Barbara West, by email

A PIPPA SAYS You're right, this is a very heavy infestation of mealybugs. These are tiny soft-bodied insects that feed on sap, usually of indoor plants. They cluster together and are covered with white waxy fibres.

I suspect that this particular plant may be too damaged to survive, so I would advise you to dispose of it. An infestation like this can spread to your other house plants, especially other succulents and cacti. You could perhaps take cuttings from any unaffected parts, but keep them isolated, as mealybugs aren't always easy to spot initially.

If you notice the problem at an earlier stage on other plants, you could consider using the biological control *Cryptolaemus*. This biocontrol is a type of ladybird and its young and adult stages are both prolific predators of mealybugs.



White fibrous fluff is a tell-tale sign of sap-sucking mealybugs

PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; PAUL DEBOIS; JASON INGRAM; GETTY/SANDER MEERTINS

'Blue Star' is a compact juniper with a low, spreading habit

Q What could I plant under the bird feeders beside my rock garden?

Chris Orgill, Cheshire

A MATT P SAYS It sounds like you need plants that form low mounds and can cope with birds hopping about, but aren't so tiny that they'd get overwhelmed by germinating bird seeds.

I love sea thrift (*Armeria maritima*), which forms small clumps and comes in a choice of flower colours. The cheery pompom blooms are also a good nectar source for pollinators. Given its native origins on sand dunes, it's happy in full sun and sandy soil, and is long lived.

Another option is *Juniperus squamata* 'Blue Star', a juniper that forms a neat blue hummock. For something a little taller, try *Pinus mugo* 'Mops', a dwarf pine that produces little cones and loves sun and sandy soil.

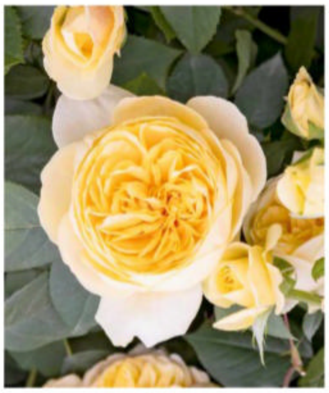
Plant all these in a little group rather than on their own.

Q Please suggest roses to train on our house walls

Rona, by email

A MATT B SAYS First you'll need to fix wires or trellis to the walls to support your roses. Varieties that only reach about 2.5m tall are easier to prune, tie in and deadhead, needing only a short stepladder. Train more vigorous varieties horizontally to keep at an accessible height.

Varieties to consider include Malvern Hills, a rambler up 4.5m tall, with few thorns. Its clusters of deep yellow buds are followed by dainty, double yellow flowers that become paler with age. Bring Me Sunshine is a repeat-flowering new English rose – the climbing form reaches 2.5m. Its rosette blooms start orange-yellow and turn pale apricot, with a strong myrrh fragrance. 'Climbing Ophelia', up to 5.5m, produces clusters of pink blooms from June to the first frosts.



Cheer up a wall with climbing rose Bring me Sunshine

Q Can I get rid of blackfly on my viburnum and philadelphus?

Angela Burr, Dorset

A PIPPA SAYS Unfortunately, blackfly (just like greenfly and other aphids) aren't only widespread, they also tend to build up huge populations very rapidly. On both philadelphus and viburnum it's likely that you're seeing the black bean aphid (*Aphis fabae*), as these shrubs are the winter/spring hosts of this aphid species. They may also overwinter as eggs on the common spindle bush. When they hatch, the aphids feed on the shrubs' foliage, often causing curling, puckering and sometimes yellowing. Although this doesn't look great, the damage isn't usually serious, and the aphids then move onto bean plants.

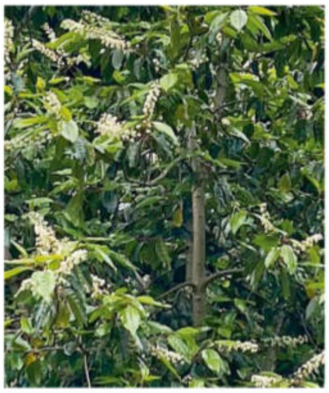
Try attracting more birds to the shrubs, to help control the aphids. Also do everything you can to attract insect predators of aphids, such as ladybirds, hoverflies and lacewings, as these (or their larvae) consume large numbers of aphids.

Ladybirds and their larvae will feast on aphid colonies

Q What is this self-seeded tree?

Lindsay Addington, Lancashire

A MATT P SAYS This is a Portuguese laurel, *Prunus lusitanica*. I think it's a more handsome alternative to cherry laurel, *P. laurocerasus*, which has a less elegant leaf to my eye. All parts of this plant are poisonous, so do take care when handling. It was most likely seeded by a bird that had eaten berries from another plant nearby.



Portuguese laurel is evergreen, with white summer flowers

Give raspberry plants a boost by feeding and mulching

Q How can I revive my small raspberry bed?

Jane, Somerset

A MATT B SAYS Try to improve the existing conditions. Feed in spring with slow-release general fertiliser, such as blood, fish and bonemeal, then mulch around them with well-rotted compost or manure. Make sure there is always a plentiful supply of water too. Alternatively, lift your raspberries when dormant, then replant them into a raised bed filled with home-made compost.

Most bee hotels can be taken apart for annual cleaning

Q Should I clean out my bee hotel?

V Jones, Somerset

A PIPPA SAYS Yes, annual maintenance is needed. At the end of summer, clean out any cells that are still walled up. Don't use chemicals, just water and a stiff brush, then leave to dry before putting the bee hotel back in place. This helps to deter any build-up of parasites, fungal diseases and other issues.

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Q My potted nerine is two years old but has never flowered. Why?

John Rolleston, by email

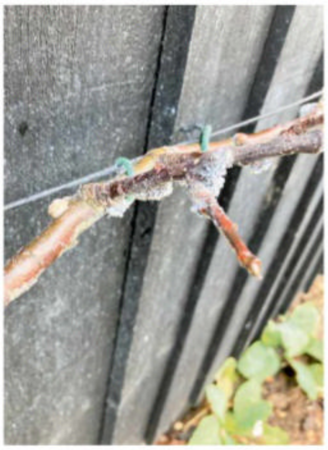
A MATT P SAYS Nerines can flower poorly when their roots are congested, as the bulbs can become exhausted. I suggest replanting yours outside in the ground if it's a hardy species such as *Nerine bowdenii*. Plant it at the foot of a sunny wall, with the neck of the bulb above the surface, then mulch with grit.

Nerine bowdenii **is prized for its vivid pink, autumn flowers**

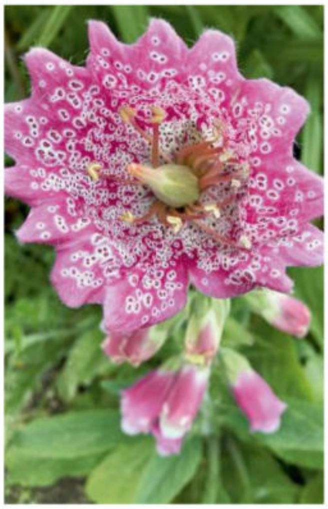
Q What are these woolly patches on my espalier apple?

Jackie Hodson, by email

A PIPPA SAYS This is a classic woolly aphid infestation. If you look closely at the white woolly patches, you'll see tiny aphids. Like other aphids, they feed by sucking sap, in this case on apples, crab apples, cotoneaster and pyracantha. They're often attracted to pruning wounds and splits in the bark.



Try to wipe off woolly aphids or spray off with a jet of water



This unusual foxglove flower is caused by a genetic variation

Q What has happened to my foxglove flower?

Tim Hannaford, Warwickshire

A MATT B SAYS This is a very unusual form of our native foxglove and has been named *Digitalis purpurea* 'Campanulata', where each stem of an otherwise normal plant terminates in a large, dominant, upward facing and eye-catching bell-like flower. This is formed by several flowers at the top of each stem fusing together to become one single large flower.

Although not often seen in gardens and available from only a few nurseries, it was recorded in 17th-century herbals. It also occurs in white-flowered forms. Flowers like this are known as peloric (meaning they are radially symmetrical) and were of great interest to Charles Darwin.

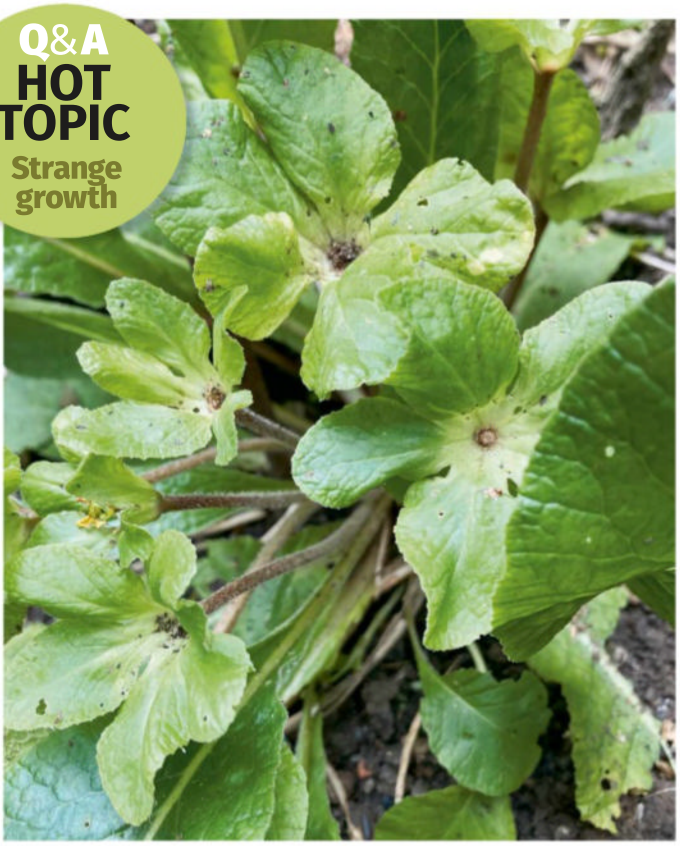
Q My primrose looks very odd – has something gone wrong?

Sue Pitman, by email

A PIPPA SAYS What a fantastic thing – I do like life's oddities! There is a green-petalled primrose called 'Francisca', but yours definitely has what appears to be miniature green leaves instead of green petals. There are two possible reasons that spring to mind. The first is that your plant has spontaneously mutated, so has undergone a genetic change and that this shows as green foliage in place of petals. The second is that it could be the result of your plant being infected by a virus or virus-like organism.

Both of these possible options aren't all that uncommon in plants, and primroses seem to show unexpected changes more often than some other flowers.

Q&A HOT TOPIC Strange growth

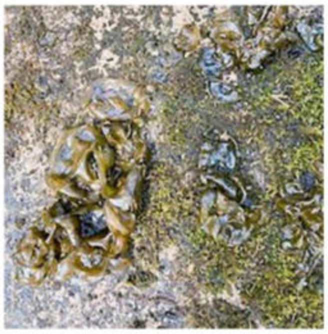


A virus could make primrose flowers develop in unusual ways

Q How can I stop this slime appearing?

Pam Attwood, Leicestershire

A MATT P SAYS These patches of jelly-like slime look like a type of bacteria called nostoc. It doesn't harm plants, but is a sign of compacted, waterlogged ground or poor soil health. To reduce it, start mulching the area, which will help matters by improving the soil structure.



Nostoc likes dampness, so better drainage should deter it

PHOTO: JASON INGRAM

Q&A gardeners' question time

Q Why does my ceanothus only grow horizontally, not vertically?

Jo Foster, West Yorkshire

A PIPPA SAYS Your plant is probably a horizontal form of ceanothus. These are popular and readily available, and it may have been hard to see what the plant's ultimate growth form would be when you bought it.

You say that your plant has grown about 90cm horizontally in its first year, so it's certainly healthy, even if that's not what you had hoped for!

Pomegranate plants need full sun and a hot summer to bear fruit

Q How should I look after my small pomegranate plant?

Jonathan McKenzie, Hampshire

A MATT P SAYS Pomegranates make handsome and exotic-looking garden plants. The main thing they need is warmth, so I'm pleased to hear that you're in the south of the UK and that you've planted your shrub against a sunny fence.

Pomegranates need heat to ripen their wood and, even more importantly, protection from late spring frosts, which can kill them outright. Given your plant's bushy nature, I wonder if you have the dwarf form, 'Nana', which is popular in cultivation.

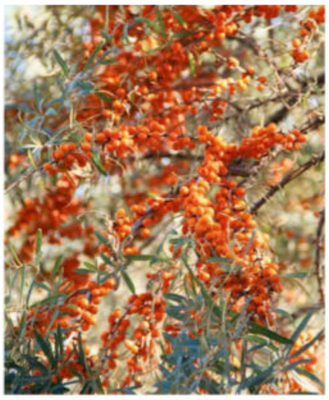
It's a good idea to mulch around the base of the shrub, but, as with any woody plant, always leave a gap around the stem, so damp mulch doesn't touch it and cause rotting.

There isn't much you can do to hurry your plant to start fruiting. In a long hot summer it should flower and give you the odd fruit, although these are likely to be rather small. Still, the orangey-red flowers will be quite a talking point.

Q Which plants would make a windbreak for my seaside garden?

Meyrick Simmonds, Guernsey

A MATT B SAYS Try sea buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*) with narrow, silvery leaves and orange fruits, and evergreens such as *Escallonia* 'Apple Blossom' with pale pink flowers, *Olearia illicifolia* with daisy-like flowers, and silvery *Elaeagnus* × *submacrophylla*.



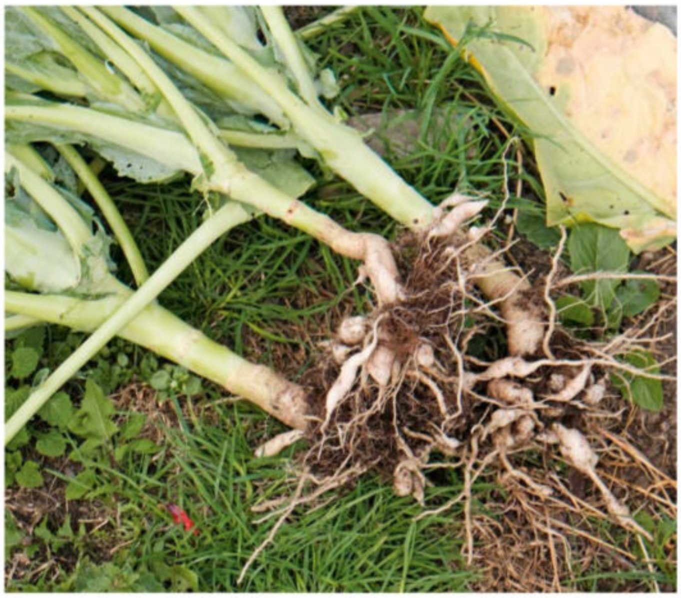
Sea buckthorn is an effective and attractive windbreak

Q Help! Clubroot has just appeared on our allotment

Ray Tincombe, Cornwall

A PIPPA SAYS Clubroot infects brassica plants, causing swollen roots and poor growth. It can last in soil for many years and sadly allotments are often affected by this and other long-term soil issues – not because anyone has done anything wrong, but simply because host crops have been grown on the site for many years. Clubroot is very easily introduced and spread – in soil on tools, wheelbarrows, boots, etc – and even a small amount of soil can contain a lot of clubroot.

There are no treatments available, but clubroot thrives in moist, acidic soil, so liming and improving drainage creates less favourable conditions. Some brassica varieties are resistant – they may still contract the infection but are better able to cope with it.



Clubroot distorts brassica roots, causing smaller, stunted crops

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Puzzles

Take a break from the garden with these brain-teasers

Step by step

By changing one letter each time to make a new word, can you transform PINK into ROSE in five steps or less?

PINK

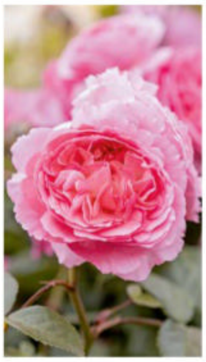
_ _ _ _

_ _ _ _

_ _ _ _

_ _ _ _

ROSE



Flower girls

A	E	S	A	D	A	Y	S	I	A	D	L
R	C	A	I	T	P	I	F	E	Y	V	Y
V	Y	I	M	R	A	V	E	P	I	E	R
I	R	O	R	Y	I	Y	P	S	S	R	I
D	A	P	O	E	R	O	A	T	P	O	P
E	M	D	R	M	P	P	E	R	H	N	E
I	E	Y	A	L	E	L	C	A	Y	I	H
R	S	H	N	P	O	L	Y	P	H	C	Y
Y	O	F	L	I	H	Y	I	P	O	A	L
S	R	E	V	E	R	N	S	S	A	C	I
A	S	R	A	O	S	F	E	L	S	Y	L
P	A	I	C	I	L	E	F	A	D	A	I

Many girls' names are inspired by or shared with plants. Can you find these 12?

DAISY
DAPHNE
ERICA
FELICIA
IRIS
IVY
LILY
MELISSA
POPPY
ROSEMARY
VERONICA
VIOLET

Salad days

Use each letter in the grid once to spell out six easy-to-grow leaves for tasty summer salads

E	C	R	E	I	N
C	N	A	S	E	I
R	H	D	C	R	U
Z	E	I	O	V	R
K	L	H	T	C	A
O	D	O	M	Y	R

_ _ _ _ _

_ _ _ _ _ _

_ _ _ _ _ _

_ _ _ _ _ _

_ _ _ _ _ _

_ _ _ _ _ _ _

Border revamp

Unscramble the anagrams to spell out four perennials that bloom all summer long

RUIN GAME ____________

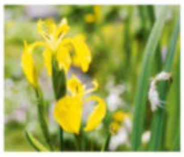
I HAD NUTS ____________

SO SO PRICE ____________

MEN ON STEP ____________

Water colours

Pictured below are four pond plants, but their names have got muddled. Can you pair up the right genus and species to make the correct botanical name for each photo?



BUTOMUS CORDATA

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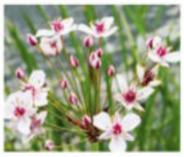

IRIS ELATA

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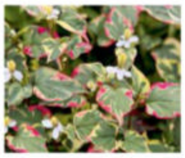

CAREX UMBELLATUS

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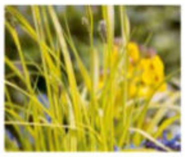


HOUTTUYNIA PSEUDACORUS

____

____

PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; PAUL DEBOIS; GETTY/HSVRS; JASON INGRAM

Puzzle solutions over page ▶

Crossword

Put down your trowel, pick up a pen and exercise those brain muscles instead...

ACROSS

1 Tidy up canes of this soft reddish-pink fruit (9)

7 Describes soil with a pH below 7.0 (4)

8, **16 down** Water greenhouse tomatoes regularly to prevent this (7,3,3)

9 Strip of ground for planting flowers or shrubs (6)

11 Immature bulb, of an onion for example (3)

12 *Ricinus communis* is better known as castor __ plant (3)

13 'King __', a popular maincrop potato (6)

15 A variety of *Pyracantha coccinea* (3,4)

19 Thorn __ is a poisonous annual with exotic-looking leaves (5)

20 Genus of ferns known as maidenhair (8)

21 Pretty summer bloomers of the *Dianthus* genus (5)

22 Organic, slow-release fertiliser that is rich in phosphorus (8)

23 __ campion is a name for *Silene uniflora* (3)

DOWN

1 Prune this berry-bearing shrub after flowering (5)

2 *Aucuba japonica* is also known as __ laurel (7)

3 'Superba' is a popular variety of red __, a summer-blooming perennial (7)

4 'Albéric Barbier' is a classic example of this type of rose (7)

5 A common name for achillea (6)

6 Container plants are particularly vulnerable to damage by __ weevils and their grubs (4)

10 Moisture-loving perennial with showy palm-shaped leaves (9)

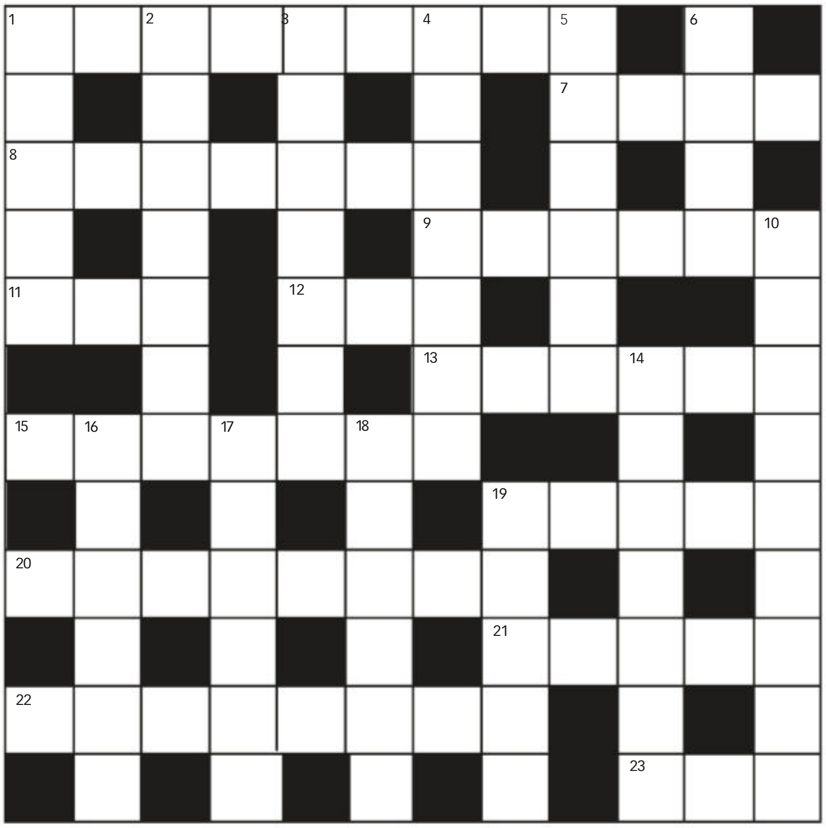
14 Plants from mountainous regions, ideal for rock gardens (7)

16 See 8 across

17 Use these to support tall large-flowered dahlias as they grow (6)

18 The part of a stamen that contains pollen (6)

19 'Glen __' is a popular mid-season variety of 1 across (5)



PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Step by step There are several possible solutions, including: **pink** rink risk rise **rose** and **pink** link line lone lose **rose**

Salad days chard, rocket, sorrel, mizuna, endive, chicory

Border revamp *Geranium, Dianthus, Coreopsis, Penstemon*

Water colours *Iris pseudacorus, Butomus umbellatus, Houttuynia cordata, Carex elata*

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

ACROSS 1 Raspberry **7** Acid **8** Blossom **9** Border **11** Set **12** Oil **13** Edward **15** Red Star **19** Apple **20** Adiantum **21** Pinks **22** Bonemeal **23** Sea

DOWN 1 Ribes **2** Spotted **3** Bistort **4** Rambler **5** Yarrow **6** Vine **10** Rodgersia **14** Alpines **16** End rot **17** Stakes **18** Anther **19** Ample

CROSSWORD AND PUZZLES COMPILED BY NICOLA TREVETT

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Issue number 412

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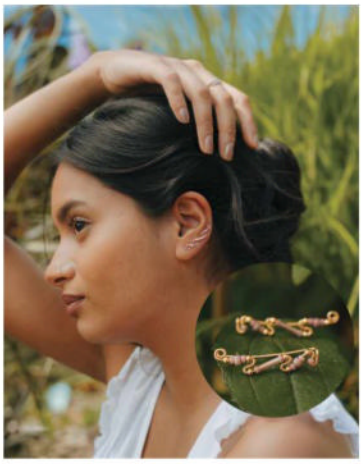

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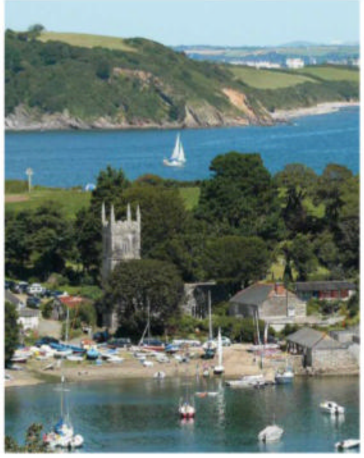

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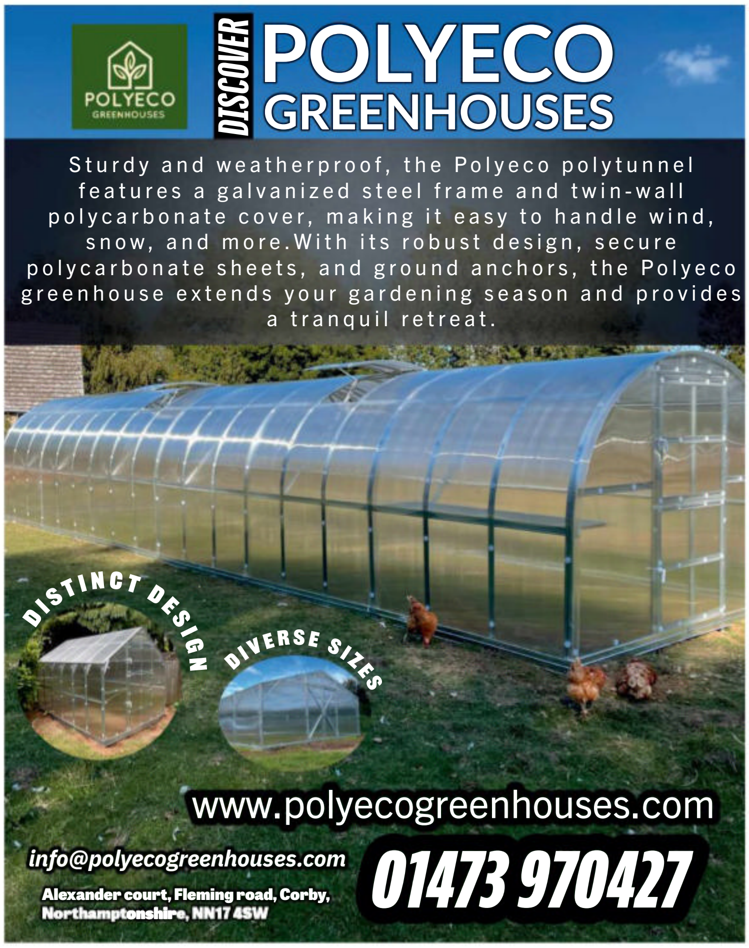

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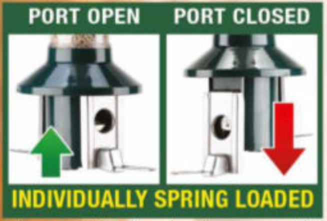

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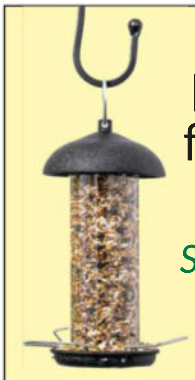

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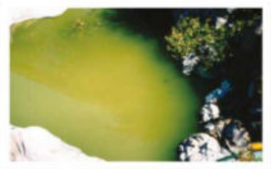

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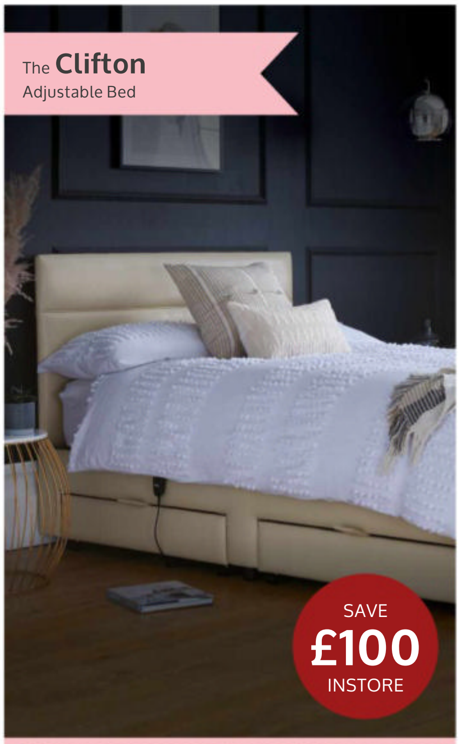

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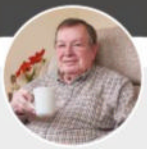

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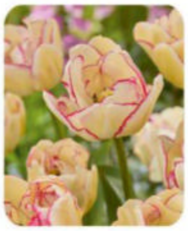

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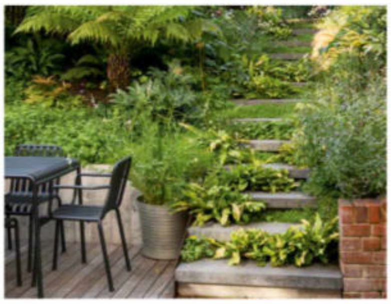

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PHOTOS: SARAH CUTTLE; NEIL HEPWORTH; JASON INGRAM

Tales from Titchmarsh

It may seem that we gardeners can't sit still for more than a minute, but it's only because being busy is so very relaxing, says **Alan**

"What is it about you that most irritates your wife?" an interviewer asked me recently. Blooming cheek! But it was a question I did not have to think about for too long. What irritates my wife above all else is my inability to sit still for more than five minutes. (Or so she says. Rather an exaggeration I feel.) I am, you see, a born potterer. Let me clarify: I am not one of those folk whose nervous energy causes them to leap out of a chair at any opportunity. I can happily sit down in front of the box and watch a two-hour drama, provided it captures my imagination. But that's about the time limit for the duration of my inactivity. I can read a book during the day on holiday but during the working week I admit that such an indulgence is more difficult. Ten or fifteen minutes just before bed is my ration.

Perhaps it's something that comes of being a gardener. You'll know what I mean. I go out there on a sunny morning with the intention of completing a certain task but it is half an hour before I finally get round to it, having been distracted by other things that need my attention – a weed or two popping up in a border, or a path that needs sweeping, or a shrub that needs a snip here and there and then… oh, yes… that's what I actually came out to do.

You see, it is the very nature of pottering that pleases me. We gardeners are in the beauty business and it is an ongoing preoccupation, not one that can be turned off at will, unless there are distractions – the things that way-lay me that result in legitimate time-wasting.

Wildlife is a prime cause. Outside my study window is a pond we constructed with wildlife in mind. And it works – for them and for us. Throughout the winter the moorhens swim to and fro, to be joined by mallard ducks in spring when the mating season begins. How many males today? Where is the female? Are they being a bit aggressive? Are the fish coming up for food yet after a long and slumberous winter? Perhaps I'll go and scatter a handful of food on the surface of the water just to see if they are rising. Oh yes; the time simply flies while I am tending to their needs or just staring and admiring the iridescence of a male mallard's head.

And in summer there are dragonflies. A hawker or a darter? The bees are busy today. Is that a buff-tailed or a garden bumble bee? I think we have more than seven different species here now. You see, here is an opportunity to waste lots of time.

If you keep chickens you will have plenty of opportunity to sit and stare at them with your morning coffee and your afternoon tea. Their pecking order becomes instantly recognisable and is aptly named. Watch them try to catch flies. Observe them scratching at the ground and then, with their head on one side, try to spear the worm or the grub that they have unearthed.

> "Of all the opportunities to waste time, the bird feeders are top of the list. I can watch the robins and blue tits very happily every day"

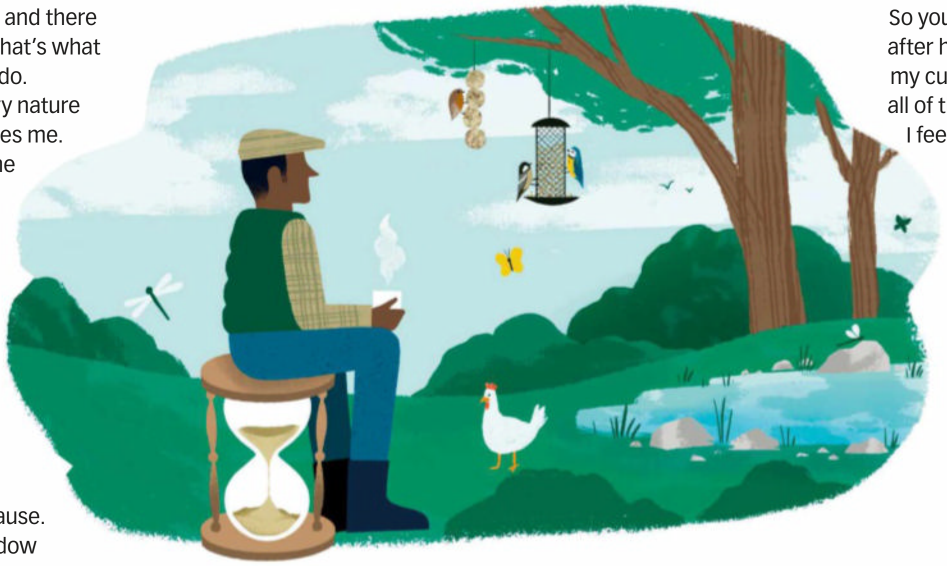
But of all the opportunities to waste time, the bird feeders are top of the list. I can watch the robins and the blue tits very happily every day, but when a long-tailed tit or a great spotted woodpecker arrives then I really can down tools and watch for… ooh… minutes on end.

I know I must get better at sitting back and admiring my handiwork and the effect of the changing seasons on my garden but, you see, I can do that while I am gently deadheading, or edging the lawn or watering the containers on the terrace.

There is something irresistibly pleasurable about being gently busy, which is what a garden offers more than any other activity. There are things upon which one can concentrate, and then there are what I call the mindless tasks, like mowing. It is mindless in terms of intellectual input, but the concentration needed to achieve pleasingly parallel stripes requires its own kind of attentiveness.

So you will forgive me if, after having sat down for my cup of tea or coffee for all of three or four minutes, I feel a need to get up and… well, potter. Sorry, Mrs T.

Alan.



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